INDIA

A Record and Review of Indian Affairs

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Indiana.

The Famine. THE news from India relating to the famine has become increasingly grave during the past month. This, indeed, was expected to prove the case. Lord George Hamilton, in his despatch to the Viceroy, dated January 15th, recorded the anticipation that the number of persons on relief would increase until April, and that anxiety would continue until favourable rains had fallen in July and August. The numbers for the past month, taken from the weekly telegrams to the India Office, are as follows:—

Week ending	Number on Relief.
February 1st	2,026,000
February 8th	2,467,000
February 16th	2,750,000
February 22nd	2,948,000

In other words, there has been an increase of nearly a million during the first three weeks of February. On January 30th, Reuter's special correspondent telegraphed from Nagpur that in the large poorhouse there, supported entirely by native charity,

"the greater portion [of the inmates] are incapable of work and lie about in a half inanimate state all day long. Although the inmates are treated with all possible care *deaths among them occur daily*. . . . . Several of the inmates were sitting in a dazed condition, looking the picture of misery and starvation. Most of the children suffer from ophthalmia, which is also a terrible scourge."

On February 4th Reuter's special correspondent telegraphed from Raipur, in the Central Provinces.

"The worst failure [of the crops] is at Dharmapara, thirty miles from Raipur. The people there are in a lamentable condition. Several have already died of hunger, and many others are on the brink of starvation. Other wretched creatures, unable to stand, are lying in their houses starving. . . . . At another village in the same district over twenty deaths from actual starvation have occurred."

Again:—

"The poorhouse here, which I have visited, affords a fair criterion of the general condition to which the people have been reduced. I found it besieged by . . . . crowds of labourers in the last stage of destitution. Many of the people were mere skeletons, their stomachs quite sunken and their skin hanging in large folds, while others again had swollen stomachs—a sign of enormous privation."

The same observer added that the Government had been somewhat late in realising the situation, and that if measures had been taken earlier, much of the existing distress might have been prevented. On February 8th, he telegraphed that the Jabalpur district was the worst in Central India, and that, after comparing notes with Sir Roper Lethbridge, who was returning from the North-West Provinces, he had arrived at the conclusion that "this will be the record famine of the century, greatly surpassing that of 1876 both in area and in severity." "The distress and mortality will be," he predicted, "upon a corresponding scale." The gravity of this situation is beyond the power of words to describe, or of the imagination to conceive. It is to be regretted, however, that Lord George Hamilton, as will be seen from our Parliamentary report, steadily declines as yet to give the House of Commons any information as to the mortality due to the famine. By an

instructive coincidence, the same report includes a brief debate upon that "masterpiece of melancholy meanness"—the enforced loan, at the expense of India, of Indian troops for service at Suakin.

Inadequate Measures.

The British Committee of the Indian National Congress, have now received from their correspondents in India, the first set of replies (dated February 2nd) to the enquiries recently circulated with reference to the famine. Summarizing these important statements, which come from trusted Indian observers on the spot, we may say that for the most part they agree in declaring that the measures taken by the Government are not regarded locally as adequate, and that the rate of wages paid to persons employed on relief works is considered unduly low. With this view we may well compare the statement of Reuter's special correspondent, dated Raipur, February 2nd :—

"The *minimum* food dole allowed by the famine Code is just sufficient to keep body and soul together and prevent death from starvation, but is not sufficient to build the system up again."

For example the Congress correspondent at Ahmednagar (Bombay) writes :—

"The condition of the persons on relief is not quite satisfactory. Most of the relief work consists of breaking stones for metalling the roads—work to which the majority of persons seeking relief are not used. The average rate of wages is 1 anna 9 pies—i.e. 7-64ths of a rupee.

"All the measures mentioned in the Bombay Famine Relief Code have not yet been taken. Poor-houses not yet opened in all talukas affected. Weavers (a numerous class in the district), and artisans are not given the proper form of relief. Amount of work exacted is in excess of their ability; many cannot, therefore, earn the full amount."

"The rate of wages is considered too low. Men do not get sufficient food in consequence. Two things urgently needed: (1) increased rate of wages—the minimum to be 2 annas 6 pies; and (2) suspension or remission of the revenue demand. Also provision should be made for the preservation of cattle."

The report from Murshidabad (Bengal) states that "the Government rates of wages according to the Famine Code are quite inadequate to save the lives of the labouring class." Similarly from Oudh we hear that—

"The wages paid to labourers on relief works are considered inadequate, inasmuch as they do not supply labourers with sufficient food. In poor-houses people do not get more than 16 ounces of food, while the ration in gaols for 'simple imprisonment' prisoners is 22 ounces."

And here is the report from Muzaffurpur (Bengal) :

"Indian opinion in the district is that unless grain is imported by Government, or by some contractors under Government, it will be very difficult to save human lives. A large number of poor people of the respectable castes require help in the shape of charitable relief and loans. They are prevented by caste rules and social position from resorting to manual labour or taking food from the poor-houses shortly to be opened by Government."

Palliating the Symptoms.

Meantime public sympathy in the United Kingdom has been thoroughly aroused — nowhere, perhaps, more thoroughly than in Lancashire, where the workers, despite the considerable depression of trade which the famine has caused, are contributing a regular weekly subscription out of their wages to the Relief Fund. But, while the efforts of charity cannot be too strenuously put forth, it is all-important to remember that their scope is limited to palliating the symptoms. They do not, because they cannot, touch the root of the disease. It is manifest, however, that if Lord G. Hamilton has his way the public will be left to the illusion that the symptoms are the whole of the disease. We print elsewhere a brief report of the recent meeting at St. James's Hall, organised by the Social Democratic Federation, where it will be seen that the most moderate of the speakers was Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. Lord G. Hamilton has since sent a "reply" to the contentions urged by Mr. Hyndman, whose public-spirited efforts in bringing the true financial disorders of British India to light have received, as they deserved, the cordial gratitude of many Indians. Mr. Hyndman will have no difficulty in turning the "reply" of the India Office inside out and upside down. Nobody in his senses wishes to ruin the credit, or destroy the railway system, of India. What is wanted—as we have never ceased to urge in these columns—is to mitigate the extreme poverty of the mass of the Indian people by reforming, at all necessary points, the system which has in a large degree brought that poverty about. Lord G. Hamilton told the Harrow boys a fortnight ago that the present price of wheat in India was, curiously enough, lower than the price in England. Apparently he did not perceive that this remark was, in the circumstances, a striking piece of testimony to the poverty of the Indian people. The best friends of British rule in India at this moment are those who endeavour to go beyond official optimism, and probe beneath the surface. We commend to the careful attention of our readers the articles by Sir W. Wedderburn M.P., and Mr. A. J. Wilson which are printed in our present issue.

The Plague.

To the horrors of starvation in India have been added the horrors of the plague. The Viceroy telegraphed to the India Office on February 22nd that 843 deaths from the plague in Bombay had been reported during the week, and that 813 deaths from the same cause had occurred during the previous week. Truly it is impossible to magnify the afflictions under which India is suffering at this moment. One of our correspondents at Bombay writes on February 6th: "Our fair city of Bombay is in a sad plight,

living in the clutches of a dread disease which has almost devastated it. There is hardly a quarter of its vast population of nearly a million souls left in it, and that, too, is living in hourly dread of death. The mortality is scarcely below a thousand a week through the plague alone, and this has continued for the last twenty weeks, and heaven knows for how many more weeks it will continue. People have to leave their homes, and fly to various places, suffering many privations. The chief result of the exodus is the spread of the plague in various parts of the Presidency, many of whose towns have been largely infected, such as Karachi, Poona, &c. As to the real cause of this sudden visitation, we are as yet in the dark. But the general opinion is that, at first imported from Hong-Kong or Bagdad, the plague-germs have found a very congenial soil in the drains and sewers of Bombay. These have been found to be in a disgraceful state. Tons upon tons of dirt that had accumulated for ten or fifteen years, during which the drains had never once been opened to be cleansed, were taken out of them and allowed to lie for days in the streets. The panic is intense. Trade is at an end. Our several industries are denuded of hands, capital and labour having left the city in a fright which is not quite unjustifiable. What with the famine and the plague our part of the country is in a very pitiable condition. God help us! for the hand of man seems unable to do anything. Our sanitary science is helpless against the plague. Our immediate hope lies in the French doctor, Yersin; and the Russian doctor, Haffkine, is among us doing his best to stay the disease, but with little effect so far. A strange sight this—a Russian and a French doctor looked to for help by the second city in the British Empire! Cannot England send a Commission of her experts at this crisis to study the disease and save us?"

Judicial and Executive Duties.

Sir Charles Elliott has not gained much by his recent attack upon the proposal to separate judicial from executive duties in India. His perverse criticisms have simply had the effect of provoking a series of crushing replies, and not the least effective of them is the article which Mr. C. D. Field, formerly a Judge in the High Court of Calcutta, contributes to the current number of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*. Mr. Field limits his remarks to Lower Bengal (where it is proposed that an experiment should be made in the desired reform,) and at once places the demand on its true footing as the revival of a question exhaustively discussed thirty-five years ago. In other words, those whom Sir C. Elliott attacks merely ask that effect should be given to the conclusions of the Police Commission, and that the work begun in 1860 should now be completed. Sir Charles Elliott, it must be remembered, asserted that the existing system was good in itself, and denied that it had produced hardship and injustice. But he supported his contentions by the simple process of ignoring the evidence on the other side. The cases collected by the late Mr. Manomohan Ghose were but typical instances of injustice which had occurred within the actual experience of an individual barrister. Sir Charles not only treated them as if they were the whole of the matter, but, as Mr. Field incisively shows, persistently overlooked the points which they undoubtedly illustrate. For example:—

"Dealing with the Jalmapore Mela Case, Sir Charles Elliott considers that the censure of the *then* Lieutenant-Governor did not impute to the District Magistrate any misuse of judicial power; and contends that the words of the Resolution—'In the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor these proceedings involved a grave misuse of judicial authority'—were not intended to apply to the District Magistrate. The whole context shows that they were intended to apply. Sir Charles Elliott thinks that the censure of the Magistrates did not 'charge' him 'with any misconduct which he could not commit if the views of those who support the separation of his judicial from his executive functions were carried into effect.' But the conclusion of the Head of the Local Government who had to deal with the case was—'The whole case is a striking illustration of the danger and inconvenience of the union of executive and judicial functions in the same officer. . . . . It is clear to the Lieutenant-Governor that years of patient and careful working on proper lines can scarcely undo the mischief and remove the prejudice against the existing system produced by a simple case like the present.'"

A "Feasible Concession."

Needless to say, Mr. Field refuses to concede with regard to the whole of India Sir C. Elliott's far-reaching postulate that the keynote to success in administration is "the adoption of the Oriental view"—the concentration of all power in the hands of an individual representative of Government. In some provinces, it is true, British rule at first followed this pattern. But the "Oriental view" never existed in Lower Bengal, nor where it once existed has it remained stereotyped. Lower Bengal is a stranger to the "monotheistic incarnation" in which enthusiasts persuade themselves that the people believe. The precious theory is our old friend the "prestige" argument in a slightly altered dress. But, as Mr. Field puts it, there is a limit to the number of reins that can be grasped in a single hand—to the number of horses that can be driven by the best whip—and if this limit be disregarded, the safety of the coach will be endangered. Sir Charles Elliott thinks scorn of *homines unius libri*. Does he believe in a Jack-of-all-trades? He thinks, or at any rate declares, that the District Magistrate should retain his anomalous judicial powers in order that he may try political *causes célèbres* in which an Indian might be suspected of bias or weakness. But these, as Mr. Field well says, are the very last cases that should be taken up

by an official whose hands are full of other business, and whose want of daily familiarity with practice and procedure is likely to result in mistakes. Besides, in any practical scheme of separation, European magistrates would find a place. The District Magistrate is commended as a legal teacher. But what does he know about law? He is commended as a peripatetic inspector. But cannot—nay, does not—a Judge inspect? The financial objection, as Mr. Dutt and others have conclusively proved, is a myth. It is also a peculiarly shabby pretext in view of what Mr. Field calls the "mighty revenue flowing in from Court fees." Mr. Field concludes in words that Sir Charles Elliott should find as clear as Mr. Ghose's cases :—

"The statesman whose intellectual vision is not limited by the horizon of the system in which he had his first training, and who can see what progress demands, will not resist a concession to Native public opinion which is now feasible, which cannot be shown upon any solid grounds of argument to be inexpedient, and for the expediency of which the most cogent reasons have been advanced."

"The Member for Anglo-India."

Members of the House of Commons have during the past week been much interested in an Indian compilation, of which each of them has apparently received a copy, under the title "The Indian Political Estimate of Mr. Bhownaggree M.P., or the Bhownaggree Boom Exposed." The volume, which is published at Bombay, contains some 272 pages of the "opinions of nearly the whole Indian press regarding the extraordinary attempt made by Mr. Bhownaggree to pose as the representative of the Indian people and to obtain from them a certificate of approval of his Indian politics." Mr. Bhownaggree has brought this emphatic repudiation upon himself. When he first entered the House of Commons, there was a general disposition in India to hope that he would acquit himself creditably. We ourselves wrote in that sense, and the British Committee of the Indian National Congress made a friendly reference to him in their annual report. But Mr. Bhownaggree very soon made it quite impossible for self-respecting Indians, or Englishmen interested in the welfare of India, to countenance his tactics, and, on the occasion of his recent visit to India, his pretensions were greeted on every side with keen resentment. This compilation of press opinions will form a useful record of his discomfiture. By way of frontispiece it reproduces a striking cartoon from the *Hindi Punch*. It is rather a pity that the compilers were not also able to give the cartoon from our own *Punch* representing Mr. Bhownaggree—or Mr. Bow-the-Knee, as he is called in the House of Commons—"walking into" the Indian Parliamentary Committee. The caricature attracted a good deal of attention, and caused much amusement, among members of the House of Commons. In this connexion it may be interesting to cite the remarks of the *Saturday Review* (January 30th) upon Mr. Bhownaggree's intervention in the debate on Sir W. Wedderburns's amendment to the Address :—

"Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the Address on Tuesday respecting the condition of India brought the inevitable Mr. Bhownaggree to his feet, His flatulent speech did not disappoint those who stayed to listen by any excellence of matter or manner. Mr. Bhownaggree is a fussy person, puffed up with ideas of his own great importance, but with no ability to support his pretentiousness. Like many of his fellow-Indians he has rather a brassy voice. . . . . Sir William is popular on both sides of the House. He was formerly in the Bombay Civil Service. His brother, Sir David Wedderburn (from whom Sir William inherited the baronetcy,) was a member of the House of Commons some years ago."

A Crisis in Bhopal.

A well-informed correspondent writes: "Where is the member for India in these days? Why has he not put a question in the House, so as to enable the Government to throw some light upon what is going on in the Native State of Bhopal? Is it not the case that there is something like a crisis there to an industrious system of mis-government and oppression carried on under the nose of the English Resident for several years past? The Begum, being a *pardahnashin* princess, inevitably leaves the whole administration to her Prime Minister, Imtiaz Ali, formerly a native pleader at Lucknow, who is said to have filled every place of executive importance with his creatures from Oudh, to the number of somewhere about forty or fifty. The Begum herself is stated to be surrounded by ladies of his careful appointment. The natives are mainly Hindus, but they make no complaint against Imtiaz Ali's myrmidons on the score of religion, for they have experienced good government from Muhammadans. What they do complain of is the gross oppression and maladministration to which they are subjected. Not a single man appointed by Imtiaz Ali has had any training under British officials in revenue or other administration, or has learnt experience elsewhere. The State treasury is empty. At the same time, Imtiaz Ali's friends, who were poor men three or four years ago, are now said to be acquiring large properties in Oudh, while the Bhopal subjects are declared to be undergoing pillage, both under the forms of law and in defiance of law.

"A Political Ulcer."

"The strongest complaints," our correspondent proceeds, "come from four Tehsils adjoining the northern part of the Central Provinces. They include 'bribery, extortion, and illegal exactions.' In a Memorial to the Viceroy, they congratulate themselves on their neighbourhood to British territory, which has enabled them 'to *leave the State* without interference by the

officials.' 'There are', they add, 'about thirty other Tehsils in Bhopal, the people of which cannot come before a British Magistrate; their cases have not therefore reached your Excellency, but, if an open enquiry be made, they will all come forward to give similar evidence.' There now lies before me an abstract of over a hundred complaints submitted to the Governor-General's agent in Central India, all pointing in the same direction, and including allegations of extravagant rent-raising (*e.g.*, 100 per cent.), bribery, extortion, house-looting and false imprisonment, false charges, and grievous personal outrage (one of these being rape of a wife, followed by death). They are all sworn before a British magistrate. The Memorial mentioned contains this:

"'But the greatest sources of dread are the new magistrates and the new police officials, who are under no fear of their superiors, and against whom complaints of serious offences have not been successful. They get up cases against people who complain against the officials, and effectually silence them.'

"The most prominent men in four districts do not 'leave the State' for nothing. The Agent in Central India referred the complaints to the Resident. The Resident referred the internal administration questions, such as rent-raising, to the Darbar—that is, to Imtiaz Ali; and the cases of outrage he asked Imtiaz Ali to report upon! The complainants may well be excused if they decline to regard this preposterous formality as a just fulfilment of the Viceregal promise of enquiry. They ask an open enquiry before British magistrates on British territory and under British protection. They are obviously entitled to this. Why is justice denied to them? And what effects will a political ulcer of this nature cause, if it is not lanced to the very bottom?"

Another Mutiny Novel.

"A MAN of Honour," by H. C. Irwin (London: A. & C. Black), is not by any means a typical modern novel. Its scenes are laid chiefly in India, but of Anglo-Indian society in the generally accepted sense of the term we have none. Neither does the author attempt acute psychological analysis. His characters do not stop to analyse themselves—perhaps in real life people did less of that in the 'fifties. Jim Purefoy, the last of an impoverished race of Irish gentlemen, determined after his father's death to become a soldier, though he had till then been reading at Oxford, where he met the friend, Inglewood, who is supposed to tell the story. This plan scarcely works well. After the first few chapters the story drops into an impersonal narrative, though it is still compiled from letters to Inglewood, and at the one point where he might well have come in again as an eye-witness of events of the greatest moment to his friend's happiness, he has nothing whatever to say. In brief, the main incidents of the story are these. Purefoy, while still a boy, had fallen in love with his cousin Margaret. Before leaving for India, where he had obtained a cadetship, he put his fate to the test, and found that his cousin did not return his affection. He confided in Inglewood only, and, almost hopeless at first, set out for India, where the idea gradually shaped itself of returning some day to reverse her decision. He had spent many years in India when his senior officer, and close friend, Mowbray, returned to England on leave. At Purefoy's request Mowbray sought out Inglewood, and visited with him the old home in Ireland. Here Mowbray met Margaret and married her. They returned to the lonely station, and Jim and Margaret were thrown into constant companionship. Too late, Margaret discovered that Purefoy was far more to her than her husband, and in an unguarded moment allowed Purefoy to see it. Jim determined that he must leave the regiment, when the Mutiny put an end to his anxiety by enforcing active service. Mowbray was mortally wounded in an attack on Delhi, and died, leaving his wife and boy to Jim's care. Then comes in the question of casuistry—how far are the wishes of a dead man to bind the actions of the living? Mowbray had expressed a hatred of second marriages. Purefoy had never ceased to love Margaret, he knew that she loved him, while she had never felt more than a friendly affection for her husband. Nevertheless, the survivor determined that he could not as a "man of honour" transgress his friend's wishes, and he decided that he could not marry Margaret. The question whether his fortitude would have remained unshaken is solved in rather an unsatisfactory manner. But perhaps death was the only possible way out of such an impossible position. The characters in the book are well drawn, but Margaret is disappointing. She does not develop as she promises at first. Love—unhappy, it is true—appears to convert her from a charming, if rather strong-willed, girl into a petulant woman. The events of the Mutiny have already furnished backgrounds for many books, but they are retold here with considerable vigour, and the regiment with whose doings we are chiefly concerned is one of the border regiments of Sikhs and Pathans which did such excellent work in that critical time.

Cash in Hand.

ONE question of the hour is how much cash has the Government of India in hand? The amount of it held in India, both in the Treasuries and on deposit in the Presidency banks, is regularly published there, and may be found at least monthly in the Indian journals; though the press here takes no note thereof, not even the financial weeklies. As to the sterling amount of the Indian Government's cash balance here there does not seem to be any regular or authorised statement of the total held. That this has been very considerable during the last few months is evident from the frequent references in the City article of our dailies to the large sums that are, or have been, advanced to or withdrawn from the Money Market. For instance, in course of last month, one of these entries ran thus: "The Indian Council lent £200,000 fresh money at 1¾ per cent. for about a fortnight, while in India itself money is so scarce that the Bank of Bombay has advanced its rate to 12 per cent." Since then there has been no distinct indication of any large sums being withdrawn; so that the India Office must have been doing good *soukar* business meanwhile; and so recently as the 17th ult., the remark appeared, "The Indian Council's broker lent a little (more) money to-day almost to the middle of March."

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

I.—THE STARVING RAYAT.

By Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

If in this country a pauper died in the work-house from starvation, we should at any rate hold an inquest on his body; and some one would be made responsible. The master of the work-house might prove that when the man had reached the stage of collapse, superhuman efforts were made to restore him; but this zeal on the part of the officials would not alone suffice to clear them from a charge of manslaughter. The questions asked would be, How did the man get into this state of collapse? What was his usual diet; and who was responsible for his being all skin and bone? Was a proper diagnosis ever made of his case; and were proper remedies applied before it was too late? Not only would such questions be asked, but those responsible would be compelled to give full and true answers. The master would not be allowed to stifle enquiry on the ground that the season was not convenient; nor would he be permitted to defy and ridicule his questioners, and to prance off, singing the praises of his subordinates, and of himself. If he would not be allowed to do this, why should this sort of thing be tolerated in those who are responsible for deaths from starvation in an Indian famine? I say to the Secretary of State for India, *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur*; the difference being that in India it is not a question of one death from starvation, but of hundreds of thousands, and millions of deaths. Moreover, as regards the starving rayat, something worse than neglect is charged. The patient is now in a state of collapse, from chronic destitution and indebtedness, a ready prey to famine and pestilence; and I assert that it is the direct action of the Indian revenue authorities which has brought him into that state. The Government of India cannot plead ignorance; for I will show that it has had full warning, and that it has itself admitted the truth of the charge. Last month I told the story of Agricultural banks as a proposed remedy for the rayat's fatal indebtedness. The melancholy episode I have now to relate deals with the cause of that indebtedness. The money lender, no doubt, is the ultimate instrument of the rayat's destruction, but the originating cause of his ruin is to be found in the harsh, rigid, and unsuitable methods of revenue assessment and collection, which have paralysed his energies, and placed him a helpless victim in the hands of his creditors. How this has happened I will briefly set forth.

To understand the position we must bear in mind that, according to ancient Hindu custom, the claim of the Government, on account of land revenue, is for a certain share of the gross produce of every field. Upon this point the ordinance of Manu is as follows: "The land revenue consists of a share of grain and of all other agricultural produce. Of grain $\frac{1}{12}$th, $\frac{1}{8}$th, or $\frac{1}{6}$th, according to the soil and the labour necessary to cultivate it. This may also be raised in cases of emergency as far as $\frac{1}{4}$th." Now this reasonable method, enjoined by the religious law and approved by immemorial custom, suited the people exactly; acting as a sliding scale; so that in a bad year the rayat had to give but little; if he had no crop he gave nothing; but in a bumper year the Government shared in the general prosperity, the rayat giving gladly out of his abundance. Under this system no harassing and untimely demand for cash ever came upon the rayat, because the claim of Government did not arise till the crop was reaped, and then all that the Government had to do was to take its share. Now, our great mistake consisted in breaking up this ancient customary arrangement, instead of developing and perfecting it. In place of this elastic method, which adapted the demand to the variations of the season, we have, for the sake of official convenience, placed upon the rayat all the risk of bad seasons, a financial burden which he is not able to bear. Instead of taking the revenue in kind according to the amount of the crop, we have fixed a rigid cash assessment on each field, and this amount must be paid punctually in cash on a certain day, whether the crop is good or bad. This method of fixing an average demand, to be levied in cash irrespective of the crop, may suit the case of capitalist farmers. But it has fairly broken the back of the rayat, who is a mere peasant living from hand to mouth. Also he cannot be brought to see the justice of making a demand upon him when he has not even food for himself and his family. He says, "In former days there were Rájás that were good, and others that were bad; the good ones took a small share of our crop, and the bad a large share; but Heaven never before sent us a Sirkar (Government) which takes from us when we have no crop at all." In such matters popular sentiment is not a negligible quantity, and a wise Government will not only do justice but also be careful to convince the people that it is just. I remember well, in the early days of my service, a benevolent Collector trying to persuade a venerable village Patel of the advantages of a fixed average payment. But the old man replied by a parable. He said, "Oh Saheb, I will relate to you a story. A traveller coming to a river found a man sitting there, and asked him how deep the river was. The man replied, four feet deep, so the traveller proceeded to cross the river. It was true that the river was four feet deep *on the average*, but there was a deep hole in the middle, and into that hole

the traveller fell, and was drowned. Now if all we rayats go to the bottom in a bad year, what good will a moderate assessment do to us after that?" This is the native view of the case. But how did the innovation operate in practice? The rayat as a class possesses no cash. So the immediate effect was to drive him to the money lender, as a suppliant, in order to get the necessary rupees. And this was the beginning of sorrows. No doubt before this he had dealings with the money lender if he wanted cash to dig a well, or buy a pair of bullocks, or celebrate a marriage; but these borrowings were at his own time, and by his own free choice. In such transactions he could negotiate his loans on equal terms. But it altogether changed the relative position of debtor and creditor when the rayat was obliged, at all costs, to find a certain sum on a certain day. And in practice the new system proved more destructive than might at first sight appear; and this was so from three reasons, all of which tend to prostrate the rayat at the feet of the money lender. The first of these reasons is that under our smart official system extreme punctuality of payment is insisted on. The instalment must be paid on a certain fixed date, the result being that the rayats over the whole country side must find the cash on one and the same day. This of course immensely tightens the money-market and puts the local capitalist into a position to dictate his own terms. Secondly, the Government demands payment on a date when the crop is unripe and still upon the ground. This is done in order that the crop may be available for seizure in case payment is not punctually made. But of course the effect is to make the demand fall upon the rayat at the time when he is least able to meet it, when all his resources have been expended on his cultivation and maintenance, and before his crop is marketed. But the third aggravating circumstance is the most grievous of all, and that is the severity with which the revenue authorities deal with the defaulter: everything he possesses is liable to seizure and sale; his house and his land, his plough and his oxen, his bedding and his cooking utensils. And those who know how dearly the rayat loves his ancestral acres, will realize that to save them he will be ready to sign any bond that Shylock himself might feel inclined to place before him. It depends entirely upon the tender mercies of the money lender whether the interest charged is 25 per cent., or 50 per cent., or 100 per cent., or more. How is the rayat ever to pay back these debts? As a matter of fact he never will be able to do so. For when the crop is reaped all the rayats are alike anxious to sell; the market is glutted; and the village money lender, who is also the village grain dealer, takes over the crop at his own valuation, leaving to the rayat and his family barely enough to keep body and soul together till next harvest. Thus year by year the debt swells with no prospect of repayment. It is evident that this state of affairs could not go on for ever. And in point of fact things came to a crisis in the Deccan districts of the Bombay Presidency, during my service, about the year 1875; when the money lenders refused to make further advances to their debtors, who already owed them far more than they could ever pay. What was the result? The revenue officers of Government were suddenly brought face to face with a very serious difficulty. Hitherto, however painful the process of finding the rupees had been to the rayat, it had all been as easy as shelling peas for the officials, as the mere threat of eviction sufficed to send the rayat to the money lender, and then the rupees were forthcoming. But now this source of supply had dried up, and the Government officers had to take action on their own account. Accordingly they proceeded to wholesale attachments of land; and hundreds of holdings were sold by auction, realizing only nominal prices. To give an idea of what went on, I may mention that in the Bhimthadi Taluka alone, of the Poona Collectorate, the number of defaulting rayats in 1873-4 was 4341, the amount due from them being Rs. 82,421. To realize this sum about 200,000 acres of land, assessed at Rs. 1,35,000 were sold by auction, yielding the paltry sum of Rs. 15,010, while Government bought in, at merely nominal prices, a large acreage for which no purchasers could be found. Looking to the attachment of the rayats to their ancestral land, it is not to be wondered that these proceedings excited the most bitter exasperation; but being unable to resist the Government, they turned their anger against their creditors. Agrarian disturbances broke out all over the districts; the money lenders were attacked in their houses; their bonds, decrees, and account books were burnt; and they themselves were driven out of the villages.

These disturbances were put down by military force, and a mixed Commission, known as the Deccan Riots Commission, was appointed to enquire into the facts and causes of the outbreak. This enquiry was conducted in a most business-like way, from village to village, the exact financial position of each rayat being ascertained, with the history and causes of his ruin. And I have no hesitation in saying that the five volumes of the Commissioners' report contain the most trustworthy record in existence regarding the rayat's economic condition. Their conclusions were in substance, First, that the rayat was driven to the money lender by the harsh and rigid enforcement of the Government revenue demand; and secondly, that once in the toils of the money lender the rayat's case was hopeless, owing to the irresistible weapons furnished to the creditor

by our Debt Courts. The Commissioners at the same time exploded certain time-honoured fallacies, such as the theory that the ruin of the rayat was caused by his extravagance in marriage and other ceremonies, the Commissioners reporting that for these purposes he did not spend more than was reasonable under the circumstances.

The report and recommendations of the Commissioners led in 1879 to legislation for the relief of the Deccan agriculturist, and a Bill for this purpose was introduced into the Viceroy's Council by the Honourable Mr. (now Sir Theodore) Hope. The debates on the Bill are very instructive reading. The conclusions of the Commission were accepted; but, unfortunately, the Bill dealt only with the sins of the money lender, leaving altogether untouched the more serious sins of the Revenue department. In justice to the Council it must however be stated that they did not seek to dissemble or cloak these sins. Even Mr. Hope, himself a Bombay Revenue officer, admitted in his opening speech that "to our revenue system, must in candour be ascribed some share in the indebtedness of the rayat." And the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab (Sir R. Egerton), who had a seat in the Legislative Council, spoke out very plainly, declaring his opinion that the peasant was driven into insolvency by the great stringency with which Government exacted their revenue as a fixed sum in cash at fixed times: "It seemed to him that too little attention had been paid to this cause, which must in a great degree have contributed to, if it did not entirely originate, the difficulties of the Deccan rayat." Mindful, doubtless, of the injunction in the parable, His Honour urged the revenue authorities to show the money-lender an example of moderation: "He thought it desirable that at the same time as measures of relief were afforded to the rayat from his private creditor, the Government, which appeared as a public creditor of the rayat, should also take measures to in some way lighten the pressure of its own demand." And he recommended that Government should so modify its revenue system as to take upon itself the risks of a scanty rainfall and a precarious crop, instead of placing all these risks on the rayat who had shown himself unfit to meet them. These views were concurred in by the other speakers, including the Viceroy (Lord Lytton). But, unfortunately, nothing whatever was done by the Relief Bill to relieve the rayat from this pressure which had broken his back. The harsh and rigid revenue system was left severely alone. All the Bill did was to disarm the money lender, so that he could not recover from the rayat the sums he had lent him to pay the Government demand. The money lender was made the scapegoat; and the Government, without a blush, took up the following characteristic position: Having admitted that its own exactions had driven the rayat to the money lender, and having for years drained the money lenders' capital into its own treasury, it showed its magnanimity in purely vicarious fashion, by forgiving the rayat his debt to the money lender, while leaving untouched its own revenue exactions, the originating cause of all the mischief.

Now what would common sense suggest as the natural remedy for all this confusion and misery? Surely, a return to the good old rule the simple plan; the ancient customary usage, so dear to a conservative race, which should never have been upset. In the debate Mr. Hope well said that when we overturn "institutions which popular consent has maintained for above a score of centuries, we sometimes forget that we are not the bearers of a political revelation from heaven." It is not too late even now to retrace our steps, if we proceed with caution, and experimentally. And this is what was recommended by Sir James Caird, when, as a Famine Commissioner, he brought to the consideration of these questions an unbiassed judgment, and an unrivalled experience on all matters relating to land. His proposal was that experiments in levying the revenue in kind should be made in a few selected villages in various parts of India, the duty being entrusted to special officers known to be intelligent and painstaking. If by such experiments we could discover how one village can be made prosperous we should have a clue which would help us to make every village prosperous. In accordance with the proposal of Sir James Caird I took steps to organize an experiment on the lines suggested. It was in the Ahmednagar Collectorate, which was one of the disturbed districts in 1875. There is not space here to set forth the detailed arrangement. But the proposal was to offer to the rayats in a selected village a Permanent Settlement in kind, limiting the ordinary Government demand to a certain fixed share, say $\frac{1}{16}$th (one anna in the rupee) of the gross produce. I suggested that fraction because in Bombay the revenue authorities profess not to take more than that proportion. Then, further, in order to encourage improvements, I proposed to fix for each field a quit rent, say $\frac{3}{16}$th of an average dry crop, which the rayat might at any time elect to pay in cash instead of the $\frac{1}{16}$th of the actual gross produce. An arrangement of this kind suited equally all classes of cultivators; the ignorant and apathetic man handing over his one anna share of millet at harvest time, and not being driven to the money-lender; while the enterprising man would dig a well, and elect to pay the cash quit-rent as soon as he found that the increased value of his irrigated crop (sugar-cane, cotton, spices, fruit, or what not), made that alternative profitable to him. Similarly, as regards the collection of the Government dues in kind, the best native models were to be

followed, the Government claim being assigned for a certain annual payment to persons of high character and good local position, on such terms as to interest them in the improvement and prosperity of the land. In selecting suitable persons for the proposed experiment I received much assistance from the American missionaries in the neighbourhood. They themselves cultivated a considerable amount of land, held from Government on the usual terms, and were in thorough touch with the villagers, knowing their language perfectly, and mingling with them in their daily life. With their help I was able to mature my scheme; and the Collector of the District forwarded it to the Government with an expression of his approval. Those directly interested in the experiment and best able to judge, were of opinion that the scheme would give contentment to the rayat; a field of useful enterprise to the capitalist who desired to occupy the honourable position of a land holder; and to the Government an increasing revenue, up to a possible amount three times the existing demand. It might have been thought that a carefully prepared proposal giving reasonable hope of such benefits, without cost to Government, and with peace and harmony all round, would have been welcomed by the authorities. But this was not so. The Collector who sent up the scheme was sharply rebuked for seeking to interfere with the existing order of things; and the proposal which promised such interesting and profitable results was nipped in the bud. A subsequent attempt met with a similar fate.

In the Debate above referred to, the rayat was described as "ruined, despairing, embittered"; and nothing has been done in these long years to remove the causes of his ruin, his despair, and his bitterness. To sum up, the case stands as follows. By its sins of omission and commission the Indian administration has brought the masses of the people into a state of economic collapse, so that they die like flies at the first touch of scarcity or disease; but when the remedies are pointed out to it, it will neither apply them itself, nor permit others to do so; even enquiry is refused. With shortsighted jealousy it has taken upon itself the whole responsibility of disaster; and sooner or later the penalties arising out of that responsibility will be exacted.

II.—THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR INDIA.

By A. J. Wilson,
City Editor of "The Standard;" Editor of "The Investors' Review."

Did the reader ever try to construct an ideal India on the lines suggested by the common habit of speech all men follow in speaking of our dominion there? England's rule, we hear on all hands, is beneficence itself compared with the tyrannies the poor people had to endure under the former order of things. The capitalist is especially eloquent in describing the wonders done by us in the way of "developing" India, and the conquering soldier is not far behind him. Listening to the current talk, and reading the smug, self-satisfied language, the mind can easily draw a picture of an India prosperous above most countries in the world. Contented under our rule, the people flourish by help of the peace we insure them, and grow in wealth year by year. "Public works" are perpetually being constructed for their good, and, with rarely an interval, the foreign trade of the country expands—sure proof that all is well. Since the mutiny we have bestowed on the people thousands of miles of railways, dug them a few irrigating canals, conquered many fresh tracts of country for the redundant population to spread themselves over, created spinning and weaving industries to widen the range of employments open to them, and in many other ways laboured unceasingly to do them good. No Imperial power was ever known to do the like before in the history of the world, we are assured, and if the inhabitants of our great dependency are not happy the fault must lie in themselves. "They suffer from famine, the worst famine of the century, the worst perhaps ever experienced?" "Well, what of it? Is it not rather a good job on the whole, because it will force the Government to hurry up with those 'public works,' railways, and what not, we consider so absolutely essential to the future prosperity of the Empire?"

Such is the common argument. We have heard it over and over again. No facts are of avail against it. The idea has become burnt into the minds of the average newspaper-reading British patriot that all we do is for the good of India, and must produce that good because we say it ought to. And, therefore, such a calamity as the present appalling famine is serenely regarded as a passing accident in no way related to the true and legitimate results of our rule. Of course, it is a bit of a nuisance that so many wretched creatures should die; but, after all, would they not have died in far greater numbers had there been no railways to carry grain to the districts afflicted with drought? How can anybody be so foolish as to suppose that we have a responsibility for the "act of God" in failing to send rain for the past three years in sufficient quantity to prevent millions from perishing of hunger and disease?

Great force would lie in this reasoning if our deeds in India had really been of the disinterested, beneficent type we so usually hear them described. If, when we found the whole Peninsula at our feet in 1858, at the close of the mutiny, we had set to work to quietly develop the small immediate re-

sources around us, husbanding the revenue, enlarging the capacity of the country out of surpluses, spending as little as possible of the means provided by the usurer; if we had cut more waterways and built fewer railways, abstained from conquests and numberless frontier wars, then, indeed, to-day might have disclosed a people strong to fight its own battle against hunger, happy in the ease of assured peace. The "little stores of grain in every village," to whose existence in his youth Sir William Wedderburn testified before an idle and careless House of Commons, would have been all intact and more. We should not have had to witness a Government, full of benevolence, compelled to borrow, five, six, perhaps ten, millions sterling to enable it to reduce by possibly two-thirds the number of millions now destined to perish of hunger.

Is not this borrowing and borrowing the crux of the whole matter? The very money the Imperial *Raj* in India must borrow to fight this famine will be added to the permanent debt burdens of the dependency, just as former drafts upon the usurer's help have been, and the last state of the people be therefore worse than the first. Upholders of our "forward" policy in India always leave this aspect of the problem out of their reckoning. They habitually talk as if all the borrowed money spent in India had been *given* to it, not lent at high rates of interest by capitalists foreign to the country, who come year in and out for their income. No attempt was ever made to find out what the economic effect of the expenditure of enormous sums of foreign money was likely to be on the prosperity of India, or on the durability of our rule there. All was haphazard and assumption. We said this money would do good and it therefore must be so.

But how squares the fact with the comfortable theory? The simplest way to answer this question is to look at the expansion in the "Home charges" borne by India, as, not without a certain irony, the yearly-mounting sums the Government of the dependency is compelled to remit are commonly termed. When the Home Government, after the mutiny, took the direct responsibility of administrating the affairs of India, the total direct debt for which it was liable was under 70 millions sterling and the interest charges under 2½ millions. This was exclusive of about 26 millions raised to build railways under the costly and extravagant, but popular, guarantee-of-the-State system, but the entire "Home charges" did not amount to £8,000,000. Such charges now approach £20,000,000, exclusive of private remittances. The estimated population of the territories under British rule was about 172 millions, occupying an area of some 840,000 square miles. Between that date and 1880 the population increased about twelve millions, partly through an extension in the area of our dominions, and the total debt load, including railway capital expenditure, every penny of it borrowed, and an outlay of nearly fifty millions sterling on other "public works," had increased from a total of less than £100,000,000 to nearly £260,000,000. To-day the entire capital obligations of the Government of India, all borne by the humble peasantry, by a toiling population whose average yearly income per head is not £5 of our money, amounts to about £500,000,000, including the capitalised value of the annuities granted on a most liberal scale by the Calcutta Government in part payment for the three guaranteed railways so far bought up by the State. This prodigious load is carried by less than 225 millions of people directly under our sway, in the enlarged territories conquered by us since 1857. By these conquests the area of the empire has been enlarged some 120,000 square miles.

The sum of the matter then, is, that while the territory governed has within a period of less than 40 years expanded about 15 per cent., and the population about 30 per cent., the debt has multiplied five-fold, and is altogether out of proportion to the wealth and resources of the country. Nor is the position by any means all exhibited by a mere bald recital of this sort. The expenditure of the dominant power has grown in all directions. One form of extravagance leads to others infallibly, and the revenue wrung from the people is now nearly 1,000 million rupees per annum. As recently as 1860 it was less than 400 millions. Only a slender part of this increase comes from the returns yielded by the public works of whose beneficent effects upon the well-being of the natives we have heard so much. Indeed, the railways still remain a tax upon the general revenues of the country, owing to the extravagant terms upon which the capital for them was raised, and to the number of lines constructed merely as part of the military provisions of the dominant power, intent on self-preservation. In spite, too, of all this fresh money thrown into India every year—and lately the stream has risen to about £10,000,000 per annum, not counting the private capital embarked in tea cultivation and other private enterprises—the Government of India has always to wrestle against deficits in its budgets. By ingenious scheming the estimates may show a surplus, but actual results one year with another land the State on the wrong side of the balance sheet. This means further additions to the permanent debt, further pressure upon the helpless natives. All is quite systematic, functioning like clockwork, and all tends to the ultimate destruction of our dominion far more surely than disaffection, conspiracy or foreign invasion. When the present awful hunger is over and gone, at the cost of perhaps ten millions sterling and as many millions of human lives, the money expense

it has entailed will be added serenely to the "funded debt" of India and laid upon the backs of the inhabitants that remain. Such is the patent British system for insuring "progress"—and it does. Nothing can be more sure in this world than that by this system a nation, an empire, is hurried straight to perdition. Some day the Government of India must find itself unable to pay its way, because unable to borrow. When that day comes it may not be "good bye, glorious empire," for experience proves that bankrupt states live long and thrive sometimes, in a sense, more than those that are solvent. But where will our mighty empire be when the day comes that India says: "I am worn out and can no more keep up the fabric reared on my over-burdened back by this never-resting 'progress'—progress of which my soul is aweary unto death?"

Purblind Indian bureaucrats may rest assured that no salvation can come to the country they govern through any manipulation of the Exchange, any propping up of the value of the rupee. The cardinal factor in the position created by our unresting struggles to "improve" India is the necessity they have laid upon its alien Government to find so many millions sterling every year to pay her obligations in England—not debt obligations merely, though these count for more than half the State's burden here, but military waste and folly also. The short service system, furthermore, with its pensions, and the steadily increasing demands of private capital invested by us in India, all involve payments which have to come from the produce of the people's labour, returning to them no adequate compensation, generally no compensation at all. It is the myth of the shirt of Nessus in real life for us. We have entered upon a course which admits of no turning back—there is the pathos of it. Indian people must die to uphold our splendour, to feed our industries, and sustain our home credit, to provide pensions for the "exiles," a few brief years its masters, sent back to vegetate in their native land before the climate of India has made too great wrecks of them. And "public works" must go on. The famine itself convinces our routine "politicals" more than ever of this necessity. There is nothing for it but to submit, and wait in sadness for the end. Will it come soon? Ah, that no man can say. But this is true: The capital now embarked by us annually in India does not amount to 200 million rupees, whereas the amount due by India to England on public and private account is now about 500 million rupees per annum. Every year the divergences between the help given—at interest more or less good—and the amount due by India tends to widen by at least the amount of additional interest, profits, and savings remitted home by Government and private citizens. The day approaches, therefore, when the Government of India must face the question of a composition with its creditors. As long, however, as it is able to borrow, on one pretext or other, coin to pay for food for its starving subjects, it can put off that day. And we shall lend joyfully and with unquestioning faith as long as we have the means, or can borrow the means from somewhere else. Therefore the future, insecure as it is, top-heavy as it is, may last our time and beyond. But the end we foreshadow must come one day, and may be hastened by an accident, unless the men who rule India can be persuaded to economise and economise until taxes can be reduced and the sources of wealth for the people developed out of savings and genuine surplus resources.

III.—FIGHTING THE FAMINE.

By W. M. J. Williams.

Among Britons everywhere sympathy is deep and genuine, and there will be a desire to know the present position of the famine among their fellow-citizens in India and Burma. The £360,000 which has already been paid into the Lord Mayor of London's Fund alone, is some evidence of this, but by no means an adequate representation of the real sympathy felt by the British people.

Before passing on to notice facts bearing directly on these matters it is impossible to peruse the latest official documents published regarding the famine without regretting the way in which the full knowledge of great suffering was withheld from Parliament and the British public. Telegraphic communication between the Viceroy and the Secretary for India from the beginning of October to the 10th of January is before us. Surely the official calm in face of reports which were reaching them was too cool; the official optimism and circumlocution were almost culpable, since the stake was so many lives. There was no means of avoiding an encounter with famine, and, at best, great suffering from the first. Rains since October were wholly inadequate, prices had been rising and were rising sharply a week before the message of December 17, recommending no action in England by way of subscriptions, after this date the same or worse tale of the rains, and the number "on relief" had risen from 266,100 on the 4th December to 531,900 on December 25th. Nor is it very pleasant to find that only as Parliament was about to meet, as the Secretary for India reminds us in his telegram of January 1st, was the decision taken to let the British public have an opportunity of knowing the grim truth, and showing their readiness to aid. By that time those "on relief" were nearly 1,183,000 (see January 8th). Long before this it was evident that before fresh crops could arrive large numbers would suffer, and it is to be feared that an addiction to autocratic methods of Government, led to a lack of promptitude in exposing need. Some private benevolence might have been of great service while Government measures were getting into train, and such relief would have been justified, even though granted on wasteful lines.

At last, however, we have a perusal of the official papers, which declare the magnitude of the calamity. In a despatch to the Viceroy, the Secretary for India, giving the position on the 10th January, attempts a tabular view of the famine and the distress areas in British India. Though already

out of date the figures will be useful for comparison :—

	Famine.		Distress.	
	Square Miles.	Population.	Square Miles.	Population.
Punjab	16,800	4,139,000	30,100	6,559,000
N.-W. Provinces ..	26,200	11,273,000	50,600	26,013,000
Bengal	6,700	5,281,000	9,900	8,265,000
Burma	2,600	212,000	8,600	555,000
Madras	8,500	1,206,000	——	——
Bombay	43,000	7,009,000	9,300	2,064,000
Central Provinces .	60,200	7,824,000	13,200	1,019,000
Total ..	164,000	36,944,000	121,700	44,475,000

So that in the first week in January areas as above, containing over 81,000,000 of people, were in distress, one half nearly of that number with many famishing among them. In other words, areas containing twice the population of Great Britain and Ireland were "distressed" or "famine" areas. At that time 1,200,000 were receiving relief, 248,000 gratuitously. As this is written, there comes the weekly telegram from the Viceroy published in the *Times* of 16th February, giving figures for the week previous. It is not pleasant reading. Comparing it with the above table one sees reason to believe the figures very imperfect as they stand. Yet they seem to show that in Madras, Bengal, North-West Provinces, and Burma there has been a considerable transfer from the "distress" to the "famine" category, and as to Bombay and the Central Provinces the figures are evidently very unsatisfactory as they now appear. But, including Native States, the numbers on relief are now said to be 2,750,000, or double what they were in January. The general report however, is clear, and confirms this view. It says :—

"During week scattered showers only reported in affected tracts. . . . . Situation little changed since January telegrams as regards the extent and severity of the distress. Increasing numbers on relief indicate gradual exhaustion of resources, extension of relief system, increasing acquaintance with and readiness to resort to it. Increase will continue in North-West Provinces and Oudh till March, and may temporarily decrease harvest time, but will rise again in May and June. The same as regards Central Provinces. Much depends on course of prices. Prices show a tendency to fall, as fair crops are expected in portions of North-West Provinces and Oudh and Punjab. In Punjab distress is confined to three or four districts, in Deccan no improvement possible till monsoon. In Central Provinces character of spring harvest uncertain, but yield must be poor, throughout Bengal, effect of poor winter rice harvest is widespread, but knowledge of Burma surplus keeps down prices, and distress is not appearing in North Behar rice tracts as rapidly as was anticipated."

Is it necessary to add that this is, probably, the brightest light than can be thrown on the dismal picture, whether that of the actual or of the prospective position? The most unimaginative must realise that for months to come a continuous battle will have to be fought with the most relentless enemy known to man. Nor will the worse results of the visitation be visible in the physical condition of the people; it may be accepted at once that the moral fibre of those who suffer these great misfortunes will be profoundly affected, and in large numbers of cases with most lamentable results. To those whose duty it is to superintend the welfare of India's millions, these graver effects of the famine will, undoubtedly, be a matter of profound sorrow and concern. That being so, it will be of great interest to turn to the efforts which we are making to battle with the enemy and bring relief to the sufferers.

The methods of relief fall into two classes, by official and by private effort. Let us take the latter first. In a despatch of 23rd December last, the Viceroy believed that should winter rains fail, "India will be involved in a calamity which will equal, if not transcend, in magnitude any similar calamity that has befallen her during the present century." The rains have failed. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that "there is ample scope for the operation of private charity outside the definite task of saving people from starvation which the Government has taken upon its shoulders." This would be, it was said, of the "greatest political value, as tending to draw together in the bond of sympathy the people of the two countries." Yet while this was said, a suggestion was added that the opening of subscription lists should be deferred. That attitude is to some extent explained in a quotation given from correspondence between Lord Lytton and Lord Cranbrook in 1878, in which it is laid down, "that the Government is responsible as far as may be practicable for the saving of life by all available means in its power," and private subscriptions, it was said, "can make no appreciable difference." This was neither very clear nor satisfactory in tone. In this despatch of December 23rd, it is added :—

"To these principles we steadfastly adhere. To invite subscriptions, which are to be spent in the performance of a task for which we have undertaken the responsibility, would be to invite them for the relief of the Indian Exchequer, an end towards which we could neither ask nor receive contributions with propriety."

This was against "*asking*" for private aid. The attitude was more histrionic than heroic.

The whole of the despatch more than justifies the impatience of England at the end of the year, by the hopelessly bureaucratic spirit it breathes, an exhibition of which at such a juncture will not commend the administration of India to the better graces of British subjects at home or abroad. To prevent overlapping and to supplement operations organised by Government where *famine* prevails, the following suggestions are made :—

1. Supplement the subsistence ration given, by adding small comforts of food, clothing, etc., for aged, infirm, and children.
2. Provide for the maintenance of orphans. Waifs are many after a famine.
3. Relieve respectable poor, who suffer privation rather than apply.
4. Render aid for a fresh start in life, to those who have lost their all, such as small cultivators.

It is then suggested that a Central Indian Committee in Calcutta, in touch with Provincial and Local Committees, shall be formed to co-operate with the Government while superintending the administration of all money received, whether from England, India or elsewhere. All this shows some effort to utilise generous private aid, and doubtless it will be

wise to regard experience and knowledge of the country; but it would be better to fail in symmetry of organization than to lose the opportunity of saving life, and opportunity is limited by fleeting time.

The task of the Indian Government at the moment is a stupendous one, and that Government is once again being specially tried. The most formidable and persistent opponents of its general policy will heartily applaud a vigorous and successful encounter with present difficulties. Official information to hand is more suggestive of methods proposed, than adequate to exhibit the efficiency of their application. The Famine Code as revised in 1895 seems complete as a scheme, and errs, perhaps, on paper, by excess of detail. So far as officers are concerned it is evident that responsibility for success will largely fall upon collectors, engineers and commissioners of Districts. It is satisfactory to find the leading instructions during famine to be that Local Boards are to "subordinate the ordinary objects and methods of their expenditure to the special consideration of saving life." Relief works are provided for, both as a test, and as a wise method of granting relief. Poor houses are provided for destitute persons without homes, and unfit for employment on works. Here cooked food is distributed gratuitously. Space will not permit of more than reference to this code, which, as given, is that for the North-West Provinces, but may be taken as a sample of that for the whole country. An important feature is the power to grant gratuitous relief in any case, especially to assist in maintaining a home. Of course the choice of works undertaken during the relief operations is of vast importance, and the code seems to provide for railways and roads as the principal relief works. The Secretary for India in January ticks off others sanctioned by the Indian Government of which he approves. Water for irrigation has been made available as far as possible, large advances or loans have been made to landholders for work on their estates, and to rayats ready to dig wells: Government forests have been opened so as to provide fodder, as beasts suffer also. The railway rates for food have been reduced where pressure is greatest; suspensions of revenue have been granted. Rather low down on the list is an approval of works on canals. Special inducements have been held out by Government to capitalists and local bodies to undertake work on light railways, and Local Governments are empowered and directed to organise a sufficient staff of relief officers.

A primary consideration remains, the supply of food. It was confidently believed that the supply was "practically sufficient for the needs of the people, Burma and South India having a large surplus. This was in the middle of January. Private trade is encouraged to supply it where wanted. But Local Governments are to arrange with local dealers for sending food to any relief work where it is running short. The wage paid at works for relief labour, and also the gratuitous dole, is calculated according to a ration of food fixed by a table, and not by its money value. But it is confessed that, as compared with 1876-7, the surplus of food is this year not so extensive, and indeed it is known by other means that already export from India has practically ceased. As it is intimated that anxiety will not be over until favourable rains have fallen in July and August, this makes the Government's responsibility heavy and keen, nor can it any longer discourage supplies kindly sent from Russia or any other source.

The efforts of Government thus outlined are reported this week as working as follows:

"In all provinces relief arrangements reported adequate and working well. Enquiry being made sufficiency as to Madras famine wage. Health of people and of relief workers generally good to fair in Central Provinces, where relief measures have greatly expanded. Cases of extreme famine emaciation small in proportion to numbers relieved, and occur chiefly in poor houses situated in districts where people did not come in time for help. Classes on works are mostly low-caste labourers and petty cultivators. In villages and towns home relief given largely to women and children of better classes. Provincial and local committees of Indian famine fund are now at work specially distributing blankets and clothing in poor houses and relief camps. Committee for North-West Provinces and Oudh estimates *minimum* requirements at 20 lakhs, and other provinces proportionately. Relief fund will do great good, food supplies are generally reported adequate, and no province has experienced serious difficulty. Wheat and barley are being sold for April delivery in Punjab at prices below present rates."

Almost every sentence of this telegraphic report suggests a question. The roseate colour in which things are so frequently presented makes one desirous to know what is considered "serious difficulty," and both in this statement and the figures accompanying it no estimate of the death rate is given. There is yet great fear lest much privation is unacknowledged where relief has not been sought, so that means must be taken to find the condition of many reticent families. The reference to Madras and the "famine wage" is a little disquieting, especially as the relief officially allotted must be scanty fare. This may be enough to emphasize the brief reference to a relief fund and its goodness, which seems to be a private relief fund, the need of which was so tardily acknowledged. The more the official reports from October last to this date are perused, the more the conviction grows that there is ample room, nay, a great call for a private service supplementary to the Government system of relief. It is to be feared that only by such means can a rather numerous class of cases be discovered, only by a volunteer agency not wholly regulated by Government officers. Lord George Hamilton in his last published despatch to the Viceroy, casts the responsibility for an adequate effort to cope with the situation upon the Indian Government and its officials. The Viceroy is assured of support by the Home Authorities. This is in accord with the universally expressed wishes of the British people, many of whom are subscribing large sums to the various famine funds. So general is the desire that effort should be completely successful, that it is clear that the British Government would be supported as with one voice, were it to declare it necessary to vote relief to India for famine purposes; and this being so it cannot be too strongly urged upon the Indian authorities how thoroughly they may rely on support from home, and how great also is their responsibility both in report and in administration.

IV.—THE CAUSES OF THE FAMINE.

By J. Dacosta.

At the debate on the address Sir William Wedderburn's amendment proposing an enquiry into the condition of the Indian people with a view to ascertain the causes by reason of which they were helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine, was opposed by Lord George Hamilton on the grounds (i) that a portion of the forces of the Indian Government which were warring against the advances of famine, would be removed from the sphere of action to the sphere of speculation, and (ii) that it is a mistake for any member of the House to hold out the hope that any remedies that he can suggest can prevent famine from desolating India. As the grounds thus authoritatively advanced were not supported by any argument or statement of facts or any evidence whatever, it becomes urgent to scrutinise the validity of the reasons which the Indian Secretary pleaded for opposing enquiry into the causes of a great national calamity which periodically inflicts the inexpressible suffering of starvation on millions of Her Majesty's subjects.

Of the two objections which Lord George Hamilton raised in the words quoted above, the first presents merely an administrative difficulty which can, no doubt, be satisfactorily overcome by some of the able and experienced statesmen who have devoted their services to the administration of our great dependency.

The other objection, namely, that no remedy can be suggested that will prevent famine from desolating India, is startling and seems utterly untenable in view of the records of Indian history itself. In 1770, thirteen years after the battle of Plassy and the introduction of British rule in Bengal, that fertile province was devastated by an appalling famine of which an eye-witness, the Honourable John Shore afterwards Lord Teignmouth, has left us a most affecting description. A few years later Lord Cornwallis went to India as Governor General and suggested permanent fixity in the land tax, as the measure best calculated to restore prosperity among a people who subsisted chiefly by agriculture: in a despatch dated 3rd February 1790, he said:

> "There is this further advantage to be expected from a fixed assessment in a country subject to drought and inundation, that it affords a strong inducement to the landholder to exert himself to repair as speedily as possible the damages which his land may have sustained from those calamities. His ability to raise money to make these exertions will be proportionately increased by the additional value which the limitation of the public demand will stamp upon his landed property; the reverse is to be expected when the public assessment is subject to unlimited increase."

Accordingly throughout the extensive province where the land tax was permanently fixed in 1793, the horrors of famine have been unknown for more than half a century; and official records testify to the growing prosperity of the people under the Permanent Settlement Regulations, as well as to their increased ability to tide over seasons of drought and inundation. Official records likewise show that when similar calamities befel our other Indian provinces where arbitrary assessments prevail, their populations were subjected to those acute sufferings which have been so graphically described by Lord Teignmouth with regard to the Bengal famine of 1770, and by credible witnesses of the Orissa famine of 1866, and of the famines in Madras, Bombay and the N.W. Provinces in 1877, 1878, and 1879.

Reverting further to the historical facts alluded to above, the following extracts will show that, with the exception of the enlightened and marvellously successful policy which Lord Cornwallis inaugurated in Bengal, our land system in India has been marked throughout by a lamentable degree of short-sightedness and rapacity.

"The over-estimate of the capabilities of the Deccan, acted upon by our early Collectors, drained the country of its agricultural capital, and accounts for the poverty and distress in which the cultivating population has ever since been plunged. . . . All betokens a state of poverty. The more unfavourable results must mainly be attributed to a greater degree of over-taxation." ("Blue book on the Deccan Riots Commission, 1878, page 10.")

"The margin left for the cultivator's subsistence is less than the value of the labour he has expended on the land. . . . This district has the benefit of water communication by both the Ganges and the Jumna; it is intersected by the East Indian Railway and is partly traversed by the Ganges Canal; yet the land is only worth five years' purchase, and the state of the average cultivator is one of hopeless insolvency and misery." ("Report of the Collector of Cawnpore, 1879, on the settlement of that district.")

"This district has been much mismanaged, and unauthorised charges and illegal modes of duress have prevailed very extensively. The revision of the Settlement took place at a period when the disposition to over-assess was far from being allayed. It is impossible in districts so greatly injured in their circumstances and more in what the French call their *morale* by oppressive assessments, that the mistakes and evils which have arisen can be redressed at one operation. No slight benefit will have been gained if the Government are convinced of the actual loss of money which is certain to follow over-assessment." ("Mr. Bird's report on the condition of the Budaon district.")

"The Government has read with much concern the opinion expressed by the Collector as to the undue pressure of the revised rates, in consequence of which a large quantity of land has been put up for sale in default of revenue, much of which found no purchasers." ("Government Minute on the report of the Collector of Sholapore for 1872-73.")

"The land revenue Collections in Madras for 1876-77 are returned at £3,296,575, showing a decrease of £1,248,438 below those of the previous year. Large remissions of revenue were rendered necessary on account of the decrease of cultivation and failure of crops. No remissions, however, had to be granted out of the permanently settled demand." ("Moral and material condition of India for 1876-77, page 28.")

"It seems to me in the face of such considerations quite unreasonable to urge that the revision of the

revenue survey had nothing to do with the present crisis. These considerations justify me in placing the excessive enhancement of the assessments as the special cause which has disturbed the relations of debtor and creditor in the Poona and adjoining districts." ("Report of Sir Auckland Colvin as member of the Deccan Riots Commission.")

These official statements, all pointing in the same direction, furnish an answer to the question raised in Sir William Wedderburn's amendment, seeing that they place beyond a doubt the fact that the helplessness of the Indian people to resist even the first attacks of famine is due to the poverty and destitution in which they have been plunged by oppressive taxation, chiefly in the form of excessive land assessments. On the other hand, the statements which will now be quoted, will expose, with equal force, the hollowness of Lord George Hamilton's unsupported assertion that no remedy can be suggested that will prevent famine from desolating India.

"The revenue of the permanently settled estates in Bengal has for years been realised with great punctuality. Losses sometimes occur through failure of crops, epidemics, the devastations of cyclones and other calamities of seasons; but as a rule the large present excess of the annual rental over the Government demand, enables holders to meet that demand even in the most disastrous years." ("Sir George Campbell's Administration report for 1872-73.")

"Great as was the progress which I knew had been made in the position of the cultivating classes, I was quite unprepared to find them occupying a position so different from that which I remembered them to occupy when I first came to the country. They were then poor and oppressed, with little incentive to increase the productive powers of the soil. I find them now as prosperous, as independent and as comfortable as the peasantry, I believe, of any country in the world; well fed, well clothed, free to enjoy the full benefit of their own labours and to hold their own and obtain prompt redress for any wrong." ("Sir Ashley Eden's speech in Calcutta in 1877.")

These documents and numerous other official records of the period conclusively show that when drought or inundation causes serious damage to the crops in the permanently settled districts, their population is not subjected thereby to the acute sufferings, nor does the State sustain the heavy loss of land revenue, which invariably mark similar visitations in our other Indian provinces. The documents, moreover, expose the serious error under which Lord G. Hamilton labours, when he asserts it to be a mistake to seek a remedy for famine in India. His assertion is the more unaccountable and surprising in that it directly impugns the correctness of the views proclaimed by the head of the Government of which he is a member. Lord Salisbury, speaking at Bradford in 1877, said:—

"Depend upon it, the true remedy against famine and scarcity is the frugality of the people. The people ought in years of plenty to make money enough to lay up against these times of famine. It is rather to this than to any great and passionate expenditure in public works that I would look for a remedy."

The earnestness of Lord Salisbury's language on that occasion revealed his firm conviction in the soundness of the principle he was proclaiming; and a heavy responsibility attaches to the Government of India for having withheld the administrative action and moral support necessary for carrying that obviously true principle into effect. An equally grave responsibility must now rest on those who, by preventing enquiry into the causes of famine, have made themselves instrumental in perpetuating the vicious state of things to which Lord Salisbury so significantly called public attention.

V.—HARIYAR! MAHADEO, HARIYAR!

By Donald N. Reid.

Siva or Mahadeo, the destroying god, and his consort, Parvati or Bhawáni, have their most ardent worshippers among the Hindu peasants of those provinces that are now being desolated by famine. *Mahadeo-asthans* and *Kali-chauras*, or in other words small shrines dedicated to the god and his consort, are to be found in every village of Behar, Oudh, and the North-Western Provinces. They generally consist of a small mud-built pedestal, surmounted by little idols; and are sometimes protected by a canopy of thatch or tiles. These shrines are much frequented by all classes of Hindus, on the occurrence of any calamity, and on the outbreak of small-pox or similar epidemics. In fact small-pox is always ascribed to the wrath of the malevolent goddess Bhawáni, and after her is named *devi*; while famine, blight, and destruction of crops by floods, drought, frost, or hailstorms are attributed to the wrath of Mahadeo, the destroying god. Hence, the invocation which goes up to heaven from the mouth of every devout Hindu peasant in the Valley of the Ganges during the sowing of the rabi—"*Hariyar! Mahadeo, hariyar*"—A familiar translation of which means "Clothe the fields with green, Mahadeo, clothe the fields with green." This solemn invocation, which comes from the innermost heart of the Indian peasant during the sowing season, was first heard by me in the year 1860, and I soon came to learn that the thoughts and words of the Indian peasantry were continually employed about Mahadeo, in much the same way that the name of the chief was uppermost in the minds of old-time Highlanders.

Recent events have looked as if the chiefs of the India Office and the Government of India were under the spell of Mahadeo in one of his evil moods (and had therefore unconsciously become his active agents), as the mischief which these chiefs have already worked is incalculable. The red-tapeism is prodigious of those gentlemen who are responsible for the welfare of our fellow-subjects in India, and in itself is striking evidence that some malevolent influence is at work to warp their minds. For instance, Lord George Hamilton professed to be horrified at Sir William Wedderburn's moderate and sensible demand for an immediate enquiry re-

garding the condition of the rayats, and he declared that "a more inopportune moment for such a proposal could not be imagined." But, without meaning to be rude, I beg to remind Lord George Hamilton of a happy quotation from Erasmus Darwin to the effect that "a fool is a man who never made an experiment"; and now is the time to try the experiment of devising means to stop deaths from starvation in India, instead of flourishing that ridiculous Famine Code in the faces of the unfortunate people. One can now thoroughly appreciate the following remarks of the late Mr. Aberigh Mackay in his well-known book "Twenty-one Days in India":—

> "Lord Bacon's apophthegm was that reading maketh a full man; and it would be better to give the starving cultivator Bacon than the report of that Commission (which we cannot name without tears and laughter) which goes to work on the assumption that writing maketh a full man—that to write over a certain area of paper will fill the collapsed cuticles of the agricultural classes throughout India."

Lord George Hamilton is, however, responsible for the astounding statement that famines are "inevitable incidents in India," and he therefore thinks that "it is a mistake and is wrong for any member of this House to hold out the hope that any remedies which he can suggest can prevent famines from desolating India." Who will now say that his lordship was not under the evil spell of Mahadeo when he made these mischievous and utterly msileading statements? The malevolent spirit of the hour was however found in Mr. Bhownaggree, a loyal henchman of the chief of the India Office. Now, I cannot say anything regarding Mr. Bhownaggree's practical knowledge of the rayat and his affairs; but it was evident that he had a shrewd suspicion of the rottenness of the impossible case which he was called upon to champion, as he could think of nothing better than to besmirch the reputation of gentlemen who are engaged in the thankless task of trying to ameliorate the condition of the poverty-stricken peasants of India.

But to get back again to Mahadeo, the destroying god of the Hindus, we find him at Lord Elgin's elbow on more than one eventful occasion. Surely Lord Elgin must have been unconsciously influenced by Mahadeo when he held the telescope to his official eye at Jabalpur, and remarked that he had been struck by the appearance of prosperity which characterised the country "right up to the gates of the city." Mr. Goodridge's letter to the Calcutta *Englishman* and the statement of the Central News correspondent regarding the condition of the Jabalpur rayats, had not been published when the Viceroy made his light-hearted speech. But both Mr. Goodridge and the Central News correspondent testify to the fact that the wrath of Mahadeo and his consort Bhawáni had played havoc for months among the unhappy inhabitants of Jabalpur and the neighbouring districts.

I have had many a wrestle with Mahadeo, but up to date he has proved too strong for me. For instance, if the reader will kindly refer to the *Journal of the Society of Arts* for the 30th of January 1885, he will find that I put the whole case in a nutshell, against the destroying god, during a discussion which followed a lecture delivered by Sir Edward Buck (then Mr. Buck). I said that the popular idea was that the productive power of the soil of India could not be increased, as people blindly thought that there were no proper means at the disposal of the rayat. But in North Behar alone there are 15,947 saltpetre works and 1,304 saltpetre refineries, which are doing Mahadeo's work in using up the essence of the manure of every village in this densely populated province, the whole of the saltpetre being exported. To prove the suicidal policy of this system I said that, in 1884, which was a year of drought in Behar, I plucked a wheat plant in a field near one of these saltpetre works, and this plant in its green state weighed 640 drachms, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs, as it had been properly nourished on the nitrogen from the earth of the saltpetre works. A little further on in the same field, I plucked another wheat plant which only weighed $4\frac{1}{2}$ drachms in its green state; but this plant had not received any of the nitrogen from the works, and was solely dependent on the impoverished soil for plant-food. No rain had fallen from the day they were sown in October, and I plucked them towards the end of February, the plants having grown during all those months without the aid of irrigation. But the difference was most marked between the properly-nourished and the badly-nourished plants. Here, however, was an everyday object lesson which was neglected by the worshippers of Mahadeo.

The most awful visitation of Mahadeo's wrath upon an industrious people that was ever witnessed by me, took the form of a hail-storm in February 1866. I had taken over charge of a new factory in the Saran district a few weeks before this disastrous event, and I well remember how favourably I had been struck by the appearance of the country and the growing crops of the rayats. The villages were embosomed in lovely fields of poppy, in all the snowy whiteness of full bloom which is reached before the drug begins to form; wheat and barley were in ear, and presented a most luxuriant appearance; hundreds of acres of arhar plant hid me and my horse every morning as I went my rounds; the low-lying paddy fields covered their ugliness in the soft blue flower of the flax plant; the mango and early summer fruit trees were beginning to blossom. But one afternoon a black cloud came rolling up from the west, charged with hail-stones as big as a child's hand; and in half-an-hour the crops of all my villagers were levelled with the ground and cut to pieces as if they had been trodden out by bullocks on the threshing-floor. The beautiful trees were stripped of their leaves and branches, and among the débris dead birds were lying. Here and there a bullock was to be seen killed by the hail-stones before it reached the friendly shelter of the village. And as for the tiles of my bungalow and factory buildings, I could not discover a piece that was bigger than a penny-bit, so completely had they been smashed within the space of little more than half-an-hour. Heart-rending was the wail that went up to Mahadeo and his consort Bhawáni from the ruined villagers. The false and fickle god had failed them at the eleventh hour when their crops were ripening for the sickle, and now nothing but starvation stared them in the face.

NOTICES.

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INDIA.

LONDON, MARCH, 1897.

THE "FORWARD" POLICY.[1]

After an interval of some months we are able to welcome the appearance of the third and last of Colonel H. B. Hanna's works on Indian Problems. The publication of "Backwards or Forwards?" coincides with India's agony in the clutch of the greatest disaster of the century, just as the previous volume of the series provided an opportune reply to the specious arguments advanced against the late Government's wise decision to abandon Chitral. Taken in connexion with its predecessors the present *brochure* exhibits an exhaustive yet condensed and closely reasoned exposure of the whole framework of fallacies, prejudices, and wrong-headed ambitions that have driven the military advisers of the Government of India along the path which has ended in the present distressing condition of our fellow-subjects. If any evidence, either of statistics or of expert opinion, be necessary to clinch the arguments and emphasize the conclusions of the earlier volumes, it is to be found here. Following up his attack on the military policy of the last twenty years, the gallant author examines in detail the value of the huge and costly works at Quetta and Rawal Pindi, and triumphantly shows their utter worthlessness, even from the point of view of the end which they were ostensibly designed to serve. The ruinous extravagance and futility of the military railways on the North-West frontier then receive condign punishment from the Colonel's pen, and the total cost of the misguided "forward policy" is estimated. Readers of INDIA know how often these questions have been treated in our columns, yet the most convinced opponent of the official view will welcome so handy and complete a *résumé* of the grounds of his belief, and endorse the conclusion reached by a display of unfaltering moral courage, which is the more remarkable in a member of a service where departure from traditional opinions is regarded as little short of treachery, and where adherence to the right, if it is not also the popular, view is visited with severe if refined penalties. Not the least valuable parts of a valuable work are the sketch map showing the military and commercial railways built or building on the North-West frontier, and the very complete estimate of the approximate cost of the "forward policy" down to the end of 1896, including the war of 1878-80. There it is shown that the total sum expended exceeds seven hundred millions of rupees. During the same period the cost of the police has nearly doubled, and the cost of the political department has more than doubled, while the cost of the Army, exclusive of military works, special works, Deferred Pay, and rise in Exchange, has increased by over a third. The Secretary of State for India sold, during the last financial year, bills for over three hundred and twenty millions of rupees as against one hundred and seventeen millions in 1877-8, an increase of eighty per cent, measured in pounds sterling.

With ironical acuteness the appeals to authority are drawn largely from the utterances of the avowed supporters of the theories which are under examination. On Lord Mayor's Day 1878, Lord Beaconsfield declared that,

> "So far as the invasion of India in that quarter is concerned, it is the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that it is scarcely practicable. The base of operations of any possible foe is so remote, the communications are so difficult, the aspect of the country so forbidding, that we have long arrived at the opinion that an invasion of our Empire, by passing the mountains which form our North-West frontier, is one which we need not dread."

From a detailed examination of the country between the Trans-Caucasus and the Indus, and of the forces available to Russia in the former district, it is seen that in spite of the great extension of railways in Central Asia the words of Lord Beaconsfield are as true to-day as they were when they were uttered.

"It would require a Ganges or an Indus or both to give

[1] Indian Problems, No. 3. Backwards or Forwards? by Colonel H. B. Hanna. Constable, Westminster.

Central Asia a chance of ever rivalling India in fertility. . . . Mr. C. E. Biddulph, an Indian civilian, who made the journey within the last few years, estimates the cultivable land throughout the whole of Central Asia at 2.2 per cent."

It follows that there is little chance "of any considerable addition being made to the 41,000 troops of all arms of which their Russian garrison is now composed, and we may dismiss from our minds the fear that Central Asia can ever be used as a base whence to attempt the conquest of India." The scare with reference to a Russian occupation of Herat is equally groundless. "Herat city is a mass of mud hovels sheltering some 5,000 souls, exclusive of the garrison." Sir Henry Durand affirmed his opinion that,

"To speak of the integrity of the place as of vital importance to British India was a hyperbole so insulting to common sense as scarcely to need refutation, and which ignorance of the countries west of the Indus, and experience of military operations in the East, could alone palliate."

Provided that a rational plan decrees the withdrawal of the British frontier to Jacobabad, India may remain calm even while Russia subdues the whole of Afghanistan and occupies Quetta and Jellalabad. Then the two frontiers are "separated by two hundred and two miles of painful and difficult road" at the southern extremity, "while at the northern extremity eighty-one miles of formidable passes would separate Peshawar from Jellalabad." With our granary at Multan great difficulty is experienced in feeding the garrison of three to four thousand men stationed in Quetta, which is capable of accommodating fifteen thousand. Is it probable therefore that Russia with her true base at Tiflis, 1,748 miles away, dependent for supplies on "a single-lined railway liable at one part of its course to be interrupted by sand, at another by snow, at a third by floods, exposed for hundreds of miles to the danger of a flank attack from Persia (unless we are to concede that Persia too has become a Russian province) and for other hundreds to the raids of Afghan tribes," and ending in a desert, is it probable that Russia would be able to maintain at Quetta such a garrison that any portion could be detached for an invasion? And when the terminus is reached "the terrible transport difficulty would be awaiting them." The tremendous waste of baggage animals on the British frontier during the numerous frontier wars, which in addition to the vast sums entered under the head of transport in the estimates, absorbs most of the cost of "mobilization," confirms the opinion, formed in 1882, of General Skobeleff, who in his ignorance had spoken a few years previously of "masses of Asiatic cavalry" to be hurled on India. He said, after his subjugation of Akhal,

"To invade India we should need 150,000 troops, 60,000 to enter India with, and 90,000 to guard communications. If 5000 men needed 20,000 camels (as in the Akhal war), what would 150,000 need and where could we get the transport? We should require vast supplies, for Afghanistan is a poor country, and could not feed 60,000 men, and we should have to fight the Afghans as well as you."

Any Russian force which succeeds in forcing its way through Afghanistan must be infinitesimally small, and against such a force the extravagant fortifications of Quetta and Rawal Pindi, requiring each an army corps to man properly, are worse than absurd. Yet Sir George Chesney assurred an audience of British officers that these works were merely intended as a "precaution in the event of our being taken by surprise." Comment on the notion of a surprise is superfluous.

The answer then to the question asked on the title page becomes apparent.

"What would be an act of prudence, wisdom, and moderation at a time when we are successful, would certainly be considered by the tribes on our border as an act of weakness if undertaken at the commencement of a war."

Thus Lord Roberts in his memorandum dated Kabul, May 29th 1880. Yet Sir George Chesney, who for five years was military Secretary to the Indian Government, and for five years Military Member of the Viceroy's Council, admits that on the outbreak of war the first step would consist in concentration on Quetta, Peshawar, and Rawal Pindi, and the abandonment of the frontier outposts such as Chitral, Gilgit, and the numerous smaller forts. What then becomes of the arguments based on prestige that were urged against a withdrawal from Chitral? The only prudent and honourable course open to us is to sanction at once a withdrawal which must come if war ever threatens, and is all the more necessary if, as undoubtedly is the case, Russia can never threaten India, for then the only arguments advanced to support our encroachments on Afghanistan fall to the ground. But our retirement must not be limited to the Quetta line, it must be carried back to the valley of the Indus, the natural frontier. To this conclusion one is inevitably led by the arguments put forward by the most competent authorities.

"The new frontier which has replaced that of the Indus Valley not only lacks the advantages attaching to the latter, but has actually transformed them into dangers; its communications are bad [a fact patent to every one acquainted with the disastrous history of the Sibi-Pishin and Harnai Valley Railways]; all our attemps to render them trustworthy have failed; and the forces by which it is held are out of proportion small compared to the area and character of the country, and the temper of the people they are expected to control."

Reason for the present policy there is strictly speaking none. Its origin is in the uncontrolled fighting spirit of the army. The military spirit is laudable and essential, "but above the military spirit, guiding and restraining it, should stand the

higher spirit of the statesman, which, without fearing danger, knows how to discern it." Without fear of contradiction it may be affirmed that had the Rs. 700,000,000 come out of the British taxpayer's pocket, opportunity would have been found for the requisite guidance and restraint. The *raison d'être* of Quetta and the most damaging contention against its prolonged existence is that it is "a large and ever present opportunity." It is not and cannot be a final position but merely "a stepping-stone to a better (?). Kandahar may realize our ideal, or Herat, and at least there will be more chance of a fight with the Russians if we move seventy-four or still better four hundred and seventy-four miles nearer to their frontier than we are to-day." At any rate, even if Russia wisely keeps beyond our reach, we shall be sooner or later landed in a war with Afghanistan. All this is an excellent commentary on the scare created by the *Times* last summer in connexion with the new Russian railway on the Afghan frontier, and the significant mention of immense stores of railway material at New Chaman. The military situation created by this systematic aggression is undignified, unconstitutional, and financially intolerable. In spite of Mr. Balfour's confident predictions the army has been considerably increased since the Chitral campaign. The British forces in India are at present six thousand in excess of the sanctioned establishment, and the native army has been augmented in so disproportionate a degree that the ratio between European and native troops fixed as the minimum consistent with safety at the end of the mutiny has been largely diminished, while the latter tendency of British Government has been to excite rather than allay discontent with our rule. Under present conditions it is perfectly justifiable to speak of the Imperial Service Troops of the Native States, maintained at a cost of Rs. 6,000,000 annually, as a "gratuitously created danger," and to look upon the opportunity of their abolition as a distinct gain. At this moment 14,000 British troops, 18,000 Native troops, and 114 guns are employed in watching the armies of the Independent States whose existence is justified only by the present frontier policy. Summing up, Colonel Hanna says:

"I have shown that the Forward Policy has added heavily to the burden of taxation borne by our Indian fellow subjects; that it has robbed the Provincial Governments of their balances; that it has filled the Native Army with untrustworthy Pathans and discontented soldiers of more loyal race: that it has destroyed that proportion between British and Native armed forces, without which there can be no safety for our rule: and that it has increased the independent Princes' power to injure us—in a word, that the cost of that policy has been to India the arrest of her development and the impoverishment of her inhabitants, and to Great Britain the weakening of the ties which have hitherto attached the bulk of the Indian people to her rule, and a marked decrease in her ability to cope either with civil or military disaffection."

These are not the words of a "little Englander" or an uncompromising advocate of economy, but of an officer who has served with distinction in India, went through the last Afghan war, and is thoroughly acquainted with Afghanistan and its people and with every aspect of the frontier question.

THE TENTH SOCIAL CONFERENCE.

THE annual meeting of the Social Conference proved a decided success. The attempt to revive the difficulties of last year at Poona met with a failure that one may hope will be final. In spite of it, the Conference assembled in the Conference pandal, and wisely exhibited in its proceedings the fullest harmony with the Congress. Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, who was President of the Poona Congress, came forward and congratulated the Calcutta Conference on its return to its old home, expressing the sensible and obvious opinion that the Conference was a valued and most necessary adjunct of the Congress. The Conference happily reciprocated the warm declaration of friendly and independent co-operation. "The Congress and the Conference," says the *Dnyan Prakash* most justly, "are sister institutions, one and inseparable, working in different though converging spheres." "The Social Conference," said the President with indisputable truth, "is a fitting corollary to the Congress." There is no reason in the world why the two bodies should not carry on their work effectively in different pandals: there is no specific virtue in a pandal. But, for all practical purposes, it would be a very absurd proceeding to set up different pandals; and the severance of established companionship would be interpreted as a sign of discord. In the eyes of all rational lovers of their country's welfare, discord is the one thing that must be sedulously avoided—discord, and even the merest possible suggestion of discord.

"All your strength is in your union,
All your danger is in discord."

Mr. Justice Ranade's address at the preliminary meeting, while giving interesting particulars of the progress of the movement throughout India, was interspersed with remarks of gravity and wisdom. The Conference owes more than can be set forth in a catalogue of items to the conduct and energy of the distinguished judge, who steadily exhibits the vigilance, moderation, and patient and large views of the wisest statesmanship. There is nothing more noteworthy than his explicit enforcement of the great fundamental principle of the State's dependence upon the quality of the individual citizen—a principle that seems to be too often overlooked by Western

statesmen, who think they understand their craft better than the men of the East. Mr. Justice Ranade acknowledged amply the importance of political action, such as is the main concern of the Congress. But that alone, indispensable and valuable as it is—and we, of course, should be the very last to undervalue it—is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the national development. "The State, "after all," says Mr. Justice Ranade, "exists only "to make individual members composing it nobler, "happier, richer, and more perfect in every attri- "bute with which we are endowed; and this per- "fection of our being can never be insured by any "outside arrangement however excellent, unless the "individual member concerned is in himself pre- "pared in his own private social sphere of duties to "co-operate in his own well-being." This appeal goes to the very roots of the virtue of citizenship and the mystery of statecraft. It is a message that is no less valuable to Englishmen at home than to the natives of India. And it is noteworthy that it comes ringing across the ocean from India itself, where we are officially taught to understand that there is no real political ability except what we export from England. Let us add some of Mr. Justice Ranade's summary remarks:—

"What is the inner spring of action which is setting in motion both orthodox and reform workers against their will, even where their will does not consent to move? That inner spring, hidden purpose not consciously realized in many cases, is the sense of human dignity and freedom, which is slowly asserting its supremacy over the mind. It is not confined to one sphere of family life. It invades the whole man and makes him feel that individual purity and social justice have paramount claims over us all, which we cannot ignore long without being dragged down to a lower level of existence. This or that particular reform or revival of ancient practices as some would like to call them, the removal of this or that particular defect or vice, is not, and should not be, the only end and aim of the agitation to improve our social condition. The end is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man, by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and perfecting all his powers. Till so renovated, purified, and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were, the chosen people to whom great tasks were allotted, and by whom great deeds were performed. Where this feeling animates the worker, it is a matter of comparative indifference in what particular direction it asserts itself, and in what particular method it proceeds to work. With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and lastly with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached; this is the promised land."

The noble ideal so eloquently outlined by Mr. Justice Ranade was consistently kept in view by Babu Narenda Nath Sen, in his able and wisely practical address from the chair at a subsequent meeting. Mr. Sen particularly urged that "social reform "should be carried on on strictly national, that is, "Aryan and Shastric lines," that they should "pro- "ceed with caution and make no attempt to intro- "duce violent changes in the social organisation," and that they should "show extreme tolerance for "the opinions and feelings of those who differ" from them on the subject. There were eleven resolutions discussed and passed. We cannot cite them textually, but it may be instructive to refer to their substantial contents. The amazing thing to Englishmen will probably be that such points should require any discussion whatever, or that anyone should have thought of "violent changes" in connection with any of them. But in India practical religion has got so intimately entwined with everyday life that the utmost caution and patience are necessary. The promotion of "friendly feeling "between people of different races and belonging to "different creeds," of all efforts that favour temperance, of religious and moral education "so as to "counteract, to some extent, the evil complained of "about the present Western education being too "secular in its character," and of the "education "and social amelioration of the pariahs and the "other out-castes in all parts of India"—these points need no comment; they commend themselves by the simple statement. So does the resolution in favour of the publication of full accounts of the principal receipts and expenditure, and the enforcement of a proper administration, of religious endowment funds. The Conference deprecates the excommunication of travellers beyond sea that conform to the rules of Hindu society on their return; and the warm urgency of this point a few years back has had its effect in wider relaxations of the stringent rule. Mr. Justice Ranade's statistics show no fewer than 167 Hindu students in England at the present time, and the judge insists that such pilgrimage for study "must inevitably take place," and that the people at home "will be wise in their generation, who "remove the thorns from the ways of the young "pilgrims and welcome them back on their return." The rest of the resolutions relate to the position of women. The Conference is undoubtedly right in putting into the very forefront of their programme the extension of female education; and it is worth while to quote the exact terms expressing the methods in contemplation:—

The best way is (1) to proceed on national lines by employing in female schools teachers of good character and descended from respectable Hindu families; (2) to establish training schools to secure a sufficient number of qualified female teachers; (3) to open home classes for grown-up ladies who cannot attend regular schools, with extra female teachers to visit and help at stated intervals, such ladies as read at their homes; (4) to employ a Pandita versed in Sanskrit to read passages from the Puranas and impart religious and moral instruction to ladies; (5) to take steps to publish text-books

suited to the requirements of female schools; and (6) to impart instruction in needlework, hygiene, culinary art, domestic economy, and training of children, in secondary schools.

What do English folk think of this? Can they adequately realize what such a reform means? A *reform*, we say, for it is actually set forth in the first of the Conference resolutions. To Indians the changes foreshadowed are far more serious than Home Rule or Disestablishment is to Englishmen, and, indeed, incomparably more so. Yet to Western experience they seem changes that might instantly be taken for granted. The reduction of marriage expenses, the discouragement of child marriage, and the removal of obstacles to the re-marriage of child widows, are finding a steadily increasing support, varying in different regions of the country. Finally the Conference "strongly denounces" polygamy "as at once degrading and pernicious in its consequences," and strikes specifically at Kulinism with all its monstrous abuses. There is not a single proposal in the programme that is not, to the Western mind, obviously just and right, as well as moderate, even to the point of absurdity or incredibility. Still, as has been said, the Conference does most wisely to proceed with caution. It must, on pain of disaster, take the feelings of the general community along with it, not captive, but willing on personal conviction. The leaders, it is obvious, may be fully trusted after ten years of admirable inspiration and guidance.

TREVELYAN'S LIFE OF MACAULAY.[1]

If Solon had lived in modern times, his famous maxim would perhaps have taken a different form; it would not have been "Call no man happy till he dies," but "Call no man happy till his biography has been published." And (let one Herodotean story have leave to recall another) if Lord Macaulay had retained any vestige of the old belief in a Nemesis waiting upon good fortune, he would surely, as he approached the close of his wonderfully fortunate life, have sacrificed, like Polycrates of Samos, his most prized possession, lest the jealousy of Heaven should overtake him after death in the shape of a bad biography. But Macaulay was more fortunate than Croesus or Polycrates; his life was happy to the last, and it has been commemorated in a biography which by general consent is placed among the first three in the English language. Most of his good fortune he thoroughly deserved; of this precise form he was a little undeserving. Had he not borne false witness of Boswell, propounding the characteristic but untenable paradox that the worthlessness of the writer caused the worth of his book? But Fate, more magnanimous and forgiving than the ancients imagined possible, allotted him for his biographer the man of stainless honour, the scholar and gentleman, whose withdrawal from politics, announced at the beginning of last month, has caused the profoundest regret to men of all parties. English public life is indeed perceptibly the poorer for Sir George Trevelyan's retirement; it is still permitted us to hope that English literature may be the richer, and that "the bridle of Theages" which has checked a political career may not be a serious obstacle to biographical and historical study.

Sir George Trevelyan himself reminds us somewhere that Dr. Johnson defined the qualification of a biographer as the ability "to write trifles with dignity." How exactly the sentence expresses the charm of Sir George's own book! No fact that helps us to see Macaulay in his habit as he lived is too trivial to be mentioned—his inability to sharpen a razor, for instance. And yet dignity is never sacrificed; the hero is not less of a hero because we have learnt a secret that might have been known only to his valet. To many the most delightful pages of all will be those that tell of Macaulay in his unrestrained frolicsome intercourse with his nephews and nieces. He was "the ideal uncle," confesses Mr. Leslie Stephen, otherwise a somewhat severe critic, "the uncle of optimistic fiction." And what a fascinating glimpse, by the way, of the future biographer is afforded in one of these avuncular stories, told in a letter of Macaulay's own! He had taken "Georgy" with two other children to the National Gallery. The others assumed airs of connoisseurship, "Georgy" only avowed weariness. "When I put him into the carriage, he said, half sulkily: 'I do not call this seeing sights. I have seen no sight to-day.' Many a man who has laid out thirty thousand pounds on paintings would, if he spoke the truth, own that he cared as little for the art as poor Georgy."

For Indian readers the most interesting portion of these volumes will naturally be the chapter that tells, with the assistance of copious extracts from his letters and journals, the story of Macaulay's life in India from 1834 to 1838. His biographer calls the Indian episode "the most important circumstance in Macaulay's life." His appointment to a place on the Supreme Council, as the one member of the board who was not a servant of the Company, was indeed of importance in more ways than one. It changed his whole career; it took him out of the main stream of English politics, into which he never returned, and it gave him such a competency as left him free, on his return to England, to devote

[1] "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay." By Sir G. O. Trevelyan. New Edition. (London and Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.)

himself to literature without anxiety about himself or his family. But Macaulay's three years in Calcutta are not without an importance of another kind. He rendered great services to India, both directly and indirectly; directly by his work upon the Penal Code, and by the strong, lucid and persuasive common sense of his minutes on education, the freedom of the press, and other subjects; indirectly by the brilliant historical essays which interested the mass of his fellow-countrymen at home in their great dependency as they had never been interested before. "The task of interesting Englishmen in the details of Indian administration," says his biographer, "is an undertaking which has baffled every pen except his own." It is to be feared that the sentence still requires little qualification, as regards the generality of English readers, in spite of the splendid work done since Macaulay's time by Sir William Hunter and others. The story of the violent agitation got up against Macaulay in the Calcutta press, and of the hole-and-corner meetings held to denounce him, is amusing and instructive reading even at the present day. One can well understand that neither the incisive clearness nor the obvious truthfulness of the following remarks commended them to the persons most nearly concerned:

"The political phraseology of the English in India is the same with the political phraseology of our countrymen at home; but it is never to be forgotten that the same words stand for very different things at London and at Calcutta. We hear much about public opinion, the love of liberty, the influence of the Press. But we must remember that public opinion means the opinion of five hundred persons who have no interest, feeling or taste in common with the fifty millions among whom they live; that the love of liberty means the strong objection which the five hundred feel to every measure which can prevent them from acting as they choose towards the fifty millions; that the Press is altogether supported by the five hundred, and has no motive to plead the cause of the fifty millions."

Socrates, with his perpetual enquiries for definitions, could not have been more distasteful to the Athenians than Macaulay must have made himself to the English in Calcutta by the merciless logic of such writing as this. From Socrates to Sir John Seeley, scientific thinkers have insisted on the importance of clear notions of the meaning of abstract terms like "law" or "liberty." The misfortune is that we do not always want these clear notions; they have a way of making us very uncomfortable.

To the student this book is nothing less than an inspiration. It is permeated with the love of literature, a love felt as deeply by the biographer as by the subject of the biography. Lord Macaulay's own criticisms, scattered through the volumes, are intensely interesting and suggestive. But the chief stimulus comes not from the criticisms but from the example. Few, if any, can hope to emulate the amazing rapidity with which he possessed himself of the contents of a classic. The list of books that he read and re-read at Calcutta excites despair rather than emulation in the average mind. But the deep solace that he found in the reading of great authors is a joy within the reach of all of us. "That I have not utterly sunk under this blow," he writes after the death of his youngest sister, "I owe chiefly to literature. What a blessing it is to love books as I love them—to be able to converse with the dead, and to live amidst the unreal. . . . . I have gone back to Greek literature with a passion quite astonishing to myself. I have never felt anything like it."

Incidentally, the passage just quoted is testimony to another quality of Macaulay, which is strongly brought out in this biography—the deep affectionateness of his nature. His love for his sisters meets us at every turn. To his love of children allusion has already been made. Of his care for those who were in any way dependent upon him let one instance suffice. When he received his Indian appointment he proposed to offer to keep his clerk in his service. "I cannot bear the thought," he wrote, "of throwing any person who has been about me for five years, and with whom I have no fault to find, out of bread, while it is in my power to retain his services."

In the twenty-one years that have elapsed since the first publication of this memoir, Lord Macaulay's fame, both as a man and a writer, has been subjected to much severe criticism. "Every schoolboy knows" by this time the faults of his literary style. As a historian, despite his elaborate pains, he stands convicted of many shortcomings from the point of view of his successors. He suffered from "a constitutional incapacity for not making up his mind"; he falls short of the modern standard of impartiality. The late Mr. Cotter Morison, a genuine and appreciative admirer of Macaulay's rhetorical skill and skill of construction, remorselessly exposed the want of philosophic depth in the history and in the man. "His intellectual force," says Mr. Stephen, "was extraordinary within certain limits; beyond those limits the giant became a child." The want of spirituality, again, in Macaulay's nature has jarred upon many thoughtful readers. But with all his faults he was great and loveable. Let those call him "prig" and "Philistine" who find a pleasure in so doing; but let us remember that the day may come and is perhaps not distant, when England will need the qualities whose less lovely side provokes the superfine into using their alliterative epithets. Is a splendid rectitude (to name only one of Macaulay's obvious characteristics), shining transparently through every action of a strenuous life, so superabundantly common that we should wax intolerant of it, if we fancy it is sometimes a little too conscious of itself?

OUR LONDON LETTER.

As we go to press an important memorial from Durban, with reference to the disgraceful treatment of British Indian subjects in South Africa, reaches us. On this subject, Mr. Chamberlain has made what at first blush looks like an amazing confession of impotence. It comes apparently to this, that while the British Government would hotly resent the maltreatment of British subjects in any foreign country, they are powerless in face of such maltreatment in a British colony, where *a fortiori* one would expect them to intervene. It seems that while the arrivals of Indians at the Cape are diligently chronicled, the return of Indians to British India are studiously ignored in certain quarters. If the purpose of these tactics is to inflame hostility against the Indians, it is certainly fulfilled, for we have news of a scandalous conspiracy, joined even by members of the volunteer force, to resist the landing of Indians. We may mention that throughout the past year Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has been in regular correspondence with Mr. Chamberlain on the whole subject, which we shall set forth in some detail in our next issue.

The Earl of Northbrook, who was Viceroy of India from 1872-76, gave evidence before Lord Welby's Commission on February 3rd. On the subject of the payment of troops sent out to India he said :—

"I think that India has been hardly treated in this matter. For instance, it was not right to charge India with the ordinary expenditure of the Abyssinian expedition. The extraordinary expenses were a little over seven millions, and the ordinary expenses were not more than £600,000 ; and in the case of war with Abyssinia, I do not see what interest India has in the matter. In the correspondence last year between the Treasury and the Indian Government, the former admitted that no charge should have been made upon India for the Abyssinian war. I cannot conceive how it could be held by any reasonable person that the charge of the Abyssinian war should be laid upon India. You could not say that a port in the Red Sea was concerned in the matter. As to the Egyptian operations in 1882, I had a great deal to do with the arrangements, and therefore I should not like to give any very strong opinion against those arrangements There was no doubt that as regards the keeping of the Suez Canal open India had an interest. In the first instance, it was intended that India should pay the whole cost of the expedition. That was when it was supposed that some very small force would be sufficient. The English Government had been put to a great cost. The expedition cost £1.700,000, and the ultimate arrangement made was that India paid £1,200,000 and England £500,000. In that matter India was hardly treated fairly, and it would have been better if India had only paid one-half. As to the sending of troops to Suakin in 1885 and charging India with them, I think that is a very bad case."

Lord Northbrook, in the course of his subsequent evidence, said that India had been inequitably and in some cases illegally treated in past years, and he did not see why the injustice should not be redressed.

"He suggested that in future cases, the Government of India should be the party to decide whether there were or were not direct and substantial Indian interests involved. A similar opinion had been advanced by Lord Cross in 1887, and by Sir Henry Fowler more recently. He did not think an Act of Parliament would be necessary in order to put the matter on a satisfactory basis, but suggested that the better course would be to proceed by means of a Treasury Minute approved by the Cabinet and by the India Office. He objected to any statutory arrangement. He agreed that it would be better if in the Treasury Minute some definition of what was meant by 'direct and substantial interest' were given. It might be possible to lay down some area in regard to which Indian interests might be involved, such as from the Suez Canal to Singapore, or something of that kind."

Sir Henry Brackenbury, on February 15th, gave some interesting and important evidence, before Lord Welby's Commission, with reference to what would be done in case of a European war, or of India's being threatened with invasion by Russia. The basis of the military charges on India was, he said, the theory that India should repay what England would not pay but for the military requirements of India, subject to some sort of rebate. That theory was altogether wrong. The strength of the Army in India was calculated so as to allow of a powerful field army being placed on or beyond the Indian frontier in addition to the obligatory garrisons required for keeping order in India. The necessity for maintaining in India that powerful field army was called for by the approach of a great military power into a position which enabled her to threaten directly Afghanistan (to which they were under treaty obligations) and indirectly to threaten the security of India. The object of British foreign policy, generally speaking, was to secure Great Britain's rule over her Empire. If it were desired to maintain British rule in India only for India's sake, then it would be fair to make India pay everything which could be shown was due to Britain's rule over India. But Britain's interest in keeping India under the British rule was enormous. India employed over 200,000 Britons, and millions of British capital, and India's commerce was of immense value to Great Britain. Under those circumstances, in estimating the share that India should pay, England should be generous because she was rich and India was poor, and, further, because India was practically arbitrarily governed.

Sir H. Brackenbury added that the condition of things now in India was so absolutely changed from the time of the Indian Mutiny that the army in India maintained out of Indian revenues was amply sufficient to deal with any revolt or mutiny without calling for more troops from England. Therefore, he ruled, all help to India as being out of the question. If there was any imminent probability of war with Russia England would not send one soldier either to Russia or elsewhere until she had completely established supremacy at sea, and was free from all possible danger of attack.

Captain Chaloner has given notice that he will on the 18th March call the attention of the House of Commons to the grievance of the Officers of the General List (Indian Army) in the matter of their pensions ; and to move that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to enquire into their case.

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett has given notice that, on March 2nd, he will call the attention of the House of Commons to "the great advance of Russian power in North-East Asia and generally," and will move a resolution.

We are glad to see that our spirited young contemporary, the *New Saturday*, is taking up Indian problems in no half-hearted fashion. In its issue of January 30th it printed a vigorous leading article

upon the debate on Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the address. We take the following extract from an article which ought to be read with interest throughout India:—

"The official position was authoritatively presented by the present and late Indian Secretaries, reinforced by a former Governor of Bombay, and by Mr. Bhownaggree, of Bethnal Green, who has at last come out in his true colours. It is not enough to say that Sir Henry Fowler agrees with Lord George Hamilton; he ostentatiously out-Hamiltons Hamilton. By the calendar, he appears to have been Liberal Secretary for India; yet, in point of utterance, he seems to be more Conservative than Lord Cross, and hopelessly to outdistance the late Lord Iddesleigh. Things are getting too mixed in this department. The man in the street will presently want to know what is the hidden meaning of such remarkable unanimity and fervour. And, in fact, the sooner he enquires into it the better. His representatives do not appear to care a brass farthing for the business; the debate could hardly hold a House together—it might have been the Indian Budget that was on. But what strikes us as the most serious point of all is this, that there was no man there to handle the two Indian Secretaries as they deserved.

Here is another extract from the article in the *New Saturday*:—

"The second point is a word of regret that Lord George Hamilton should have been weak enough to rail so wildly against the National Congress. What though the amendment did 'emanate from the National Congress?' 'That body,' he dared to say, 'never loses an opportunity of attacking the Indian Administration and of endeavouring to diminish the influence of that Administration over the people of India.' The assertion is simply a perversion of dislike. Two Viceroys and two Indian Secretaries—not of one political colour either—have strongly testified to the loyalty and usefulness of the Congress. The Congress may have its featherheads and windbags, like other big associations of men for political purposes (including the House of Commons itself), but its resolutions are steadily, if slowly, getting incorporated in the statute book. And that is a notable symptom."

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

NEARLY THREE MILLIONS ON RELIEF.

NOTES AND NEWS.

The latest weekly telegram from the Viceroy before we go to press states that the total number of persons on relief is now 2,948,000.

The most recent issue of the *Gazette of India* to hand publishes the following table, showing the total number in receipt of relief in all Provinces during the weeks ending January 23rd and January 30th:—

Name of Province.	Relief Works. For week ending.		Gratuitous Relief. For week ending		Total. For week ending	
	23 Jan. 1897.	30 Jan. 1897.	23 Jan. 1897.	30 Jan. 1897.	23 Jan. 1897.	30 Jan. 1897.
1. Madras	20,833	26,852	8,008	6.974	28,841	33,826
2. Bombay	256,901	281,163	7,996	11,062	264,897	292,225
3. Bengal	233,846	247,327	44,423	70.342	278,269	317,670
4. N.-W. Provinces and Oudh... ...	645,968	790,220	149.723	234,134	795,691	1,024,354
5. Punjab	53,361	62,227	16,370	20,719	69,731	82,946
6. Central Provinces	206,682	202,939	32,210	39,663	238,892	242,602
7. Burma	24,279	26,155	5,937	5,868	30,216	32,023
8. Central India ...	3[illegible],642	36,566	3,952	4,193	42,594	40,759
9. Rajputana	25,620	18,733	2.880	1,810	28,500	20,543
Grand Total ...	1,506,132	1,692,182	271,499	394,766	1,777,631	2,086,948

In this connexion we may quote the following paragraph (No. 6) from Lord G. Hamilton's despatch to the Viceroy, dated January 15th:—

"The number of people in receipt of relief during the first week in January was 1,200,000, of whom about 248,000 were receiving gratuitous relief. It is expected that these numbers will increase until April; during March and April pressure will, it is hoped, abate in tracts where the spring harvests on large areas prove good; but in some parts the numbers on relief may go on increasing until the end of May. And in no case will anxiety be over until favourable rains have fallen in July or August next."

On February 23rd the Lord Mayor's Fund at the Mansion House for the relief of the sufferers in India amounted to £344,000.

The total amount now collected by the towns and districts of Lancashire is upwards of £105,000. The cotton operatives' collections in many cases have only just begun, so that a continued rapid increase is confidently expected.

Meantime, affairs in regard to the cotton-weaving industry of north and north-east Lancashire have reached a critical stage. At a meeting of the Employers' Association recently held in Manchester, it was resolved to ascertain the opinion of the affiliated districts as to the advisability of seeking to obtain a reduction in wages to the amount of 10 per cent. The reason given was the great depression of trade, accentuated by the prevalence of the Indian famine.

The Social Democratic Federation.

St. James's Hall was thronged on February 10th from floor to ceiling for the great public meeting on the Indian famine organised by the Social Democratic Federation. A number of Indian gentleman were present, both on the platform and in the body of the hall.

Professor E. S. Beesly, who presided, said as to the argument that the holding of such a meeting was inopportune, what India wanted was justice—(cheers)—and the more the English people came to understand that they had been guilty of grievous wrong to India the more likely they were to make reparation. Their responsibility in taking the government of those 300,000,000 of people was so overwhelming and crushing that his desire was that they should give it up as soon as possible. (Cheers.) They were told they must come to the rescue of India, and contribute even in the Board schools—(shame)—in order to impress on the working classes the advantages of belonging to a vast Empire. If the state of India was due to her being squeezed during 100 years, they must help, but not again. If the people of these small islands were to make a common purse with 300,000,000 paupers the sooner they got rid of the Empire the better. It would be much simpler if the English managed their own business, and left the Indians to manage theirs. (Cheers.) There was not the least chance that either Social Democrats or Positivists would attain their ideals as long as the country was weighed down by her millstone of an Empire. (Cheers.)

Mr. Michael Davitt, M.P., moved the following resolution: "That this meeting of the citizens of London calls upon the Government to stop now and henceforth the drain of produce from India, officially certified at a value of more than £20,000,000, sterling a year, used to pay home charges, pensions, interest, etc., this drain having caused and now hideously intensifying the famine which is devastating British India." He said that the English seemed to think that their business was to manage everyone else's business—at a fair percentage. They had to deal with a serious problem—a calamity which had befallen their fellow-subject in India not for the first time. There was one curse afflicting India—the curse of English rule. (Cheers.)

Mr. R. B. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM seconded the resolution, declaring that the root of the evil was not so much the inherent faults of British rule, as the supremacy of the capitalistic system—cheers—which bound together in one chain of misery the people of England, of India, of Ireland, and the peoples of the whole world, where one class labours, and another enjoys the fruits. (Cheers.)

Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI said that he found no fault with the English people, except that they had laid down rules and principles and did not see them carried out. If their servants had betrayed their trust, the misery they caused must lie at the door of the English people. To the merchants and officials who exploited the country and carried away millions yearly India seemed very rich, but to the people who had been ground and ground without cessation for 150 years she seemed very poor. The English system was based on dishonour and hypocrisy. (Cheers.)

Mr. HYNDMAN, who was received with three hearty cheers, declared that in September and October the district officials in India had sent in reports of the beginning of the famine. Those reports were suppressed in Calcutta, and he challenged Lord George Hamilton to deny it. The action of the Government was first to conceal and then to minimise the greatest calamity that had ever befallen India. The Famine Fund had been expended in frontier wars that were ruinous to the people. Every day in every year people were dying of starvation, but four or five hundred thousand deaths were never heard of; when they died by millions, it became a little serious, because they could not get taxes out of corpses. (Cheers.) He appealed to the people not only to stop the drain from India, but to introduce a new system of government. (Cheers.)

The resolution was put and carried with enthusiasm. Other speakers followed.

The Social Democratic Federation have received the following letter from Lord George Hamilton, M.P., Secretary of State for India, in reply to their request that he should receive a deputation to place before him the resolutions passed at the meeting on the Indian famine at St. James's-hall on February 10 :—

India Office, Feb. 18.

"Sir,—I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst., asking his lordship to receive a deputation to lay before him proposals adopted at a public meeting held at St. James's-hall on the 10th inst., to the effect that all payments made in this country in connexion with the Government should now and henceforth cease. The payments include pensions for services rendered, the maintenance of establishments for recruiting the civil and military branches of the Government of India, and the payment of interest upon monies lent to the Government of India for the building of railways and other works of public utility. Lord George Hamilton assumes that the meeting which passed this resolution did not propose as a mitigation of the distress and misery now caused by famine and plague in India the bankruptcy of the Government of that country.

"Upon the credit and financial resources of the Government of India is now imposed the obligation of saving life and counteracting the terrible consequences of the famine and pestilence, and the ruin of their credit means the death by starvation of many millions. Still less can the meeting desire to destroy the railway system of India, for upon the efficient working of the railways depends the transport of the food necessary to keep the people alive. The only intelligible meaning which it appears to Lord George Hamilton can be attached to the resolution passed and approved as a panacea against distress in India, is that the charges in question—namely, 17 millions sterling, should be transferred from the Indian to the Imperial Exchequer. This will involve, as a matter of course, increased taxation among the community in these islands to the same amount—namely, £17,000,000. This is not a question which Lord George Hamilton could discuss with the proposed deputation, and it is quite outside the scope of his department, and he therefore feels that no advantage would accrue from his meeting the deputation. It should, however, be clearly understood that the weekly drafts made upon the Indian Government by the Secretary of State are regulated by the state of the cash balances in India, after they have met the full extraordinary expenditure and disbursements necessitated by the famine relief operations. If the balances are low, the bills here are reduced correspondingly, the difference being met by recourse to the borrowing powers possessed by the Secretary of State in Council, and Lord George Hamilton would point out that there is therefore no reason to fear the expenditure of the Government on the relief of the sufferers by the famine will be in any way curtailed by the necessity of discharging the financial obligations of the Secretary of State in Council in this country. "I am, &c.

"RICHMOND RITCHIE."

SIR W. W. HUNTER'S LEAFLET.

In connexion with the County, City, and University of Oxford Indian Famine Fund, Sir W. W. Hunter has drawn up the following brief leaflet, under the title, "Help for the Famine-Stricken Millions in India!" We understand that the leaflet is being extensively and usefully employed in the work of house-to-house collection.

"The Famine raging in India is one of the most terrible calamities that ever afflicted mankind. The rain on which the crops depend has failed during successive seasons. The people have gradually eaten up their stocks of grain. About forty millions of men, women, and children, are now suffering from famine; and other forty-four millions will come within danger of famine if the summer rains again fail.

"Imagine eighty-four millions of peasants, or three times the whole population of England, deprived of the harvests on which they rely for their food! The British Government of India has for the first time in the history of the world made adequate provision for feeding such multitudes. About three millions are already entirely dependent on the Government relief works. But the utmost the Government can do is to provide a bare subsistence for these vast starving masses. The diseases which come with famine—cholera, fever, and now perhaps also the plague—will bring desolation and death into hundreds of thousands of homes.

"You are urgently begged to help the widows, and orphans, and aged and sick people who will thus be deprived of their bread-winners. Your aid is also asked for large classes of poor but respectable Indians, who have eked out their little stores in the hope of the crop which has now failed, and many of whom (especially the women) would silently starve to death rather than seek public relief. During famines under the native kings of India, the people used to sell their wives and sons and daughters for food. But slavery of any sort is prohibited under British rule, and your charity will take the place of this old slave-dealing in women and children.

"Every shilling that you give will keep a poor widow or an orphan for a week; every sovereign may save some bereaved family from being broken up; every hundred pounds will enable a whole village which has lost its plough-cattle and seed-grain to make a fresh start. If you can subscribe a hundred pounds, give them. If you can afford a sovereign or half a sovereign, give it. If you can only spare a shilling, give it in Heaven's name, for no offering carries a surer blessing than the charity of the working-man to the poor.

"You are asked to help the British Government of India in its great and difficult task; to make the bare subsistence which it provides for all, something more than a bare subsistence for those who need special relief; to help thousands sorely stricken by disease towards recovery; and to bring comfort and hope into thousands of homes left desolate by death."

A telegraphic message has been sent by the Central Committee of the Indian Famine Relief Fund to all the principal Continental towns and chief ports trading with India, to the Governor-General of Canada, the *New York Herald*, and the Mayors of American ports which do business with India. An appeal has also been made to South Africa, the Australian Colonies, Colombo, Penang, Singapore, Hongkong, Shanghai, and Yokohama. The message, which has been sent in the name of Sir Francis Maclean, Chief Justice of Bengal, runs: "Central Committee Indian Famine Fund, Calcutta, earnestly solicit your cordial co-operation; highest possible scope

private benevolence, outside State relief system; area numbers affected enormous; distress rapidly increasing; feel sure unavoidable privations millions industrious poor will arouse profound sympathy of all classes of all nations. Committee make urgent appeal to you to organise relief fund; will be deeply grateful for contributions which will be publicly acknowledged." A sympathetic message has already been received in reply from the Straits Settlements announcing donations amounting to 13,000 dollars which has been gratefully acknowledged by the Secretary of the Famine Fund.

The *Pioneer* gives some particulars regarding Famine Relief operations which are now being carried on privately and without any ostentation by a few Bengali gentlemen in Benares. They have formed among themselves a small committee, who seek out, and personally distribute chappatties, parched gram and molasses to all the starving poor who daily congregate, or come to die on the chief ghats of the holy city. Rice and also attah are distributed in a private manner to the respectable poor whose position does not allow them to beg directly, and whose circumstances have become so reduced as hardly to enable them to obtain one full meal in two days. "There seems to be no doubt," says the *Pioneer*, "that these gentlemen are, quite independently of Government, doing excellent work; and it is to be hoped that their example may be widely imitated in other cities, towns, and villages. The resources of the Famine Fund might well extend help to any local efforts of this kind to any genuine efforts at self-help like this that are found in evidence."

Opinions from India.

Sir William Wedderburn's amendment to the Address, asking for a Commission of Inquiry into the material condition of India, as suggested by the famine that has now settled on the land, stood but small chance of success out of hand, seeing that we have another big Commission still on hand. But on its own merits, nothing could be more reasonable than the demand made by the Hon. Member for Banffshire. An enquiry of this kind is inevitable, whether demanded by the Congress party or by an independent member. We cannot understand Mr. Bhownaggri throwing cold water on it by expressing confidence in the work that is being done by the officials. That is worse than begging the question; it is blinking at a great fact, an imperative duty. Nor is it easy to follow Lord George Hamilton's remarks as to the Congress trying to weaken the hands of the Government. Such statements can have nothing to do with Sir W. Wedderburn's demand. That demand is for an enquiry, which, if properly conducted, would set at rest the question that has haunted responsible statesmen since Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji started it. But we see that statesmanship is a thing our Conservative friends are becoming shy of. Is the Secretary of State for India aware that in denouncing the Congress he has given the movement perhaps the most handsome *chit* it has yet received?—*Indian Spectator* (January 31st).

In another direction prompt action is desirable, with a view to relieve the financial pressure. Owing largely to the great personal interest taken in railway extension by Lord Elgin, the Government of India is committed to a construction programme, entailing an expenditure of thirty crores of rupees during the next three years. In ordinary times, it would be easy to justify a policy of vigorous extension of railways leading even to so vast an outlay as this. But the burden, which is very heavy for the Empire at her best, is peculiarly onerous at the present juncture. It is not too much to say that under existing circumstances, a determination to adhere fully to the scheme, involving the raising of a large loan in addition to that required for the Famine, might end in a serious financial crisis. . . . It may be hoped that now that the reality of the Famine has been fully and freely recognised at head-quarters, public opinion will not have once again to go in advance of the Viceroy in the recognition that cherished schemes of railway extension must give place to the great financial needs of a time of widespread distress.—*Bombay Gazette* (January 30th).

There is a Colonial Office in London. The Home Government paid £100,000 for its construction. The Colonies paid nothing. For the construction of the India Office the Home Government paid nothing; but the poor, rack-rented, grievously assessed rayats of India, living sometimes in the days of scarcity upon tiger's flesh, paid £500,000 towards the building of this palatial edifice in the heart of the capital of the Empire! Then, again, the Home Government pays £41,000 a year for the Colonial Office in London. It does not pay a farthing towards the maintenance of the India Office. On the contrary, it would seem from the evidence given before the Royal Commission that if an adjustment of accounts were made, several crores of rupees would be owing to India. The justice of Mr. Hyndman's contention is beyond dispute; and probably Mr. Hyndman felt that a great occasion like the meeting of the Mansion House, which was attended by Royal personages standing so near the throne, and presided over by the Lord Mayor, was a suitable opportunity for striking a decisive blow for justice to India.—*The Bengalee.*

There are only two ways of saving India from the inevitable fate that awaits her. One is by the reduction of her expenditure, and the other, by making the English Exchequer help her in her chronic difficulty. The pro-Indian members of Parliament, from Mr. Fawcett downwards, had tried their best to secure economy in the administration of India. All that they got for their pains was only a Committee. This Committee sat for a few years and then produced a report, and the matter ended there. Even now a Royal Commission is sitting with the same object in view. . . . India, however, needs a prompt and substantial remedy. The only sure way of making the English people earnest is to touch their pockets. They would have been taxed for the purpose of maintaining the India Office if Mr. Hyndman's proposition had been accepted. And this would have no doubt created an uproar in England. The vast majority of Englishmen have very little interest in India, which is only a source of profit to an inconsiderable number of their community. India benefits only a few hundreds of civil servants, a few hundreds of merchants, and a few thousands of military men. To the rest of the English nation, India contributes nothing or very little.—*Amrita Bazar Patrika* (January 31st).

Last Thursday the *Times* wrote that no serious harm is done by the delay of a week or two in appealing to the British public, adding by way of explanation that the famine could not be dealt with in the spurt, but was an affair of from six to twelve months' continuous exertion. Why the fact that the famine is likely to endure for months to come, should render it less desirable to collect the means of mitigating its effects with all possible speed is not clear. The truth is that so long as the Secretary of State supported the Viceroy the *Times* felt compelled to find arguments to the same purpose; but the moment Lord George Hamilton has acted on his own responsibility and asked the Lord Mayor to open an Indian Famine Fund, the leading journal discovers that the dangers of delay are overwhelming, and the Viceroy is thrown overboard. His Excellency's reasoning, it appears, "is admirable from the standpoint of statecraft," but "in practice" his policy is of doubtful "sagacity." And the attitude of sitting on the fence, while admirable from the standpoint of prudence, is of doubtful dignity when adopted by a paper with the authority of the leading journal in the case of a great Imperial emergency.—*Pioneer* (January 14th).

THE TWELFTH CONGRESS.

TEXT OF THE RESOLUTIONS.

We print below the authorised text of Resolutions carried at the Twelfth Session of the Indian National Congress, which was recently held at Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. R. M. Sayani:—

I.—The Queen's Reign.

This Congress desires to place on record its humble congratulations on Her Gracious Majesty,

the Queen Empress, having attained the sixtieth year of her reign, the longest and the most beneficent in the annals of Empire—a reign associated with the most important advances in human happiness and civilization. The Congress expresses the hope that Her Majesty may long be spared to reign over her people.

II.—THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

This Congress desires to convey to Sir William Wedderburn and the other members of the British Committee its most grateful thanks for their disinterested services in the cause of Indian Political Advancement, and accords its hearty welcome to Mr. W. S. Caine as the delegate of the British Committee to this Congress.

III.—JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE DUTIES.

That this Congress notices with satisfaction, the support of public opinion both in England and in India, which the question of the separation of judicial, from executive, functions, in the administration of justice has received; and this Congress once again appeals, to the Government of India and the Secretary of State, to take practical steps for speedily carrying out this much needed reform. In this connection, the Congress desires to record its deep regret at the death of Mr. Manomohan Ghose, who made this subject his special study.

IV.—FINANCIAL DECENTRALIZATION.

Considering that the Local Governments are entrusted with all branches of administration excepting army expenditure, superior supervision and control here and in England, and payment of interest on debt, this Congress considers the allotments made to the Provincial Governments on what is called the provincial adjustments as being inadequate to meet the growing requirements of the different provinces; and that in view of the revision of the Quinquennial Provincial Contract, which is to take place in 1897, this Congress is of opinion that the time has arrived when a further step should be taken in the matter of financial decentralization, by leaving the responsibility of the financial administration of the different Provinces principally to the Local Governments; the Supreme Government receiving from each Local Government only a fixed contribution levied in accordance with some definite and equitable principle, which should not be liable to any disturbance during the currency of the period of contract, so as to secure to Local Governments that fiscal certainty, and that advantage arising from the normal expansion of the revenues, which are so essential to all real progress in the development of the resources, in the satisfactory administration of the different provinces.

V.—SIMULTANEOUS EXAMINATIONS.

That this Congress, concurring with previous Congresses, again records its deep regret that the labours of the Public Service Commission have practically proved void of any good result to the people of this country, and repeats its conviction that no satisfactory solution of the question is possible unless effect is given to the Resolution of the House of Commons of the 2nd June 1893, in favour of holding the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Services, viz. Civil, Medical, Police, Engineering, Telegraph, Forest, and Accounts, both in India and in England. This Congress would once again respectfully urge on Her Majesty's Government that the Resolution of the House of Commons should be speedily carried out as an act of justice to the Indian people and as the only adequate fulfilment of the pledges made to them.

VI.—THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

That this Congress hereby records its protest against the scheme of reorganisation of the Educational Service which has just received the sanction of the Secretary of State, as being calculated to exclude natives of India, even those who have been educated in England, from the superior grade of the Education Service to which they have hitherto been admitted; for the words of the Resolution are:—"In future natives of India who are desirous of entering the Education Department will usually be appointed in India and to the Provincial service." The Congress prays that the scheme may be so recast as to afford facilities for the admission of Indian graduates to the superior grade of the Educational Service.

VII.—TRIAL BY JURY.

That this Congress having regard to the opinion of the Jury Commission as to the success of the system of the trial by Jury, and also the fact that with progress of education a sufficient number of educated persons is available in all parts of the country, and, concurring with previous Congresses, is of opinion that trial by Jury should be extended to districts and offences to which the system at present does not apply, and that the verdicts should be final.

VIII.—THE SALT TAX.

That this Congress once again places on record its sense of the great hardship which the present rate of Salt tax imposes upon the poorest classes of the country, a hardship which renders it incumbent upon the Government to take the first opportunity to restore the duty to its level of 1868.

IX.—INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

That this Congress once again deems it necessary to record its most solemn protest against the disabilities imposed on Indian settlers in South Africa, and the invidious and humiliating distinctions made between them and European settlers, and appeals to Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India to guard the interests of Indian settlers and to relieve them of the disabilities to which they are subjected.

X.—THE MEDICAL SERVICES.

(*a*) That this Congress notices with satisfaction that its views in regard to the urgency and lines of reform in regard to the condition of the Civil and Military Medical Services of the country, are being endorsed in influential Medical and Military circles, and that in the interests of the public, the Medical Science and the profession, as also in the cause of economic administration, this Congress once again affirms

(1) that there should be only one Medical Military Service with two branches, one for the European army and one for native troops, worked on identical lines, and (2) that the Civil Medical Service of the country should be reconstituted as a distinct and independent Medical Service, wholly detached from its present Military connection, and recruited from the open profession of Medicine in India and elsewhere, with due regard to the utilisation of indigenous talents, other things being equal. (*b*) That the Congress further affirms that the status and claims of Civil Assistant Surgeons and Hospital Assistants require thorough and open enquiry with a view to the redressing of long-standing anomalies and consequent grievances.

XI.—"Omnibus" Resolution.

That this Congress concurs with its predecessors in strongly advocating:—(*a*) Persistent pressure by the Government of India on all Provincial Administrations to induce them to carry out in its integrity the excise policy enunciated in paragraphs 103, 104, and 105 of the Despatch published in the Gazette of India of March 1890, and the introduction of a simple system of effective local option; (*b*) The introduction into the Code of Criminal Procedure of a provision enabling accused persons in warrant cases to demand that instead of being tried by the Magistrate, they may be committed to the Court of Sessions; (*c*) A modification of the rules under the Arms Act so as to make them equally applicable to all residents in, or visitors to, India without distinction of creed, caste or colour; to ensure the liberal concession of licenses wherever wild animals habitually destroy human life, cattle or crops; and to make all licenses, granted under the revised rules, of life-long tenure revocable only on proof of misuse, and valid throughout the Provincial jurisdiction in which they are issued; (*d*) The establishment of Military Colleges in India, whereat natives of India, as defined by Statute, may be educated and trained for a military career, as Commissioned or non-Commissioned officers (according to capacity and qualifications) in the Indian army; (*e*) The authorising and stimulating of a widespread system of volunteering, such as obtains in Great Britain, amongst the people of India; (*f*) The discontinuance of the grant of exchange compensation allowance to the non-domiciled European and Eurasian employees of Government; (*g*) The abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State for India; (*h*) The establishment of a High Court of Judicature and a Provincial Legislative Council in the Punjab; (*i*) That this Congress, being of opinion that the Government of India Notification of 25th June 1891 in the Foreign Department, gagging the Press in Territories under British administration in Native States, is retrograde, arbitrary and mischievous in its nature, and opposed to sound statesmanship and to the liberty of the people, again enters its emphatic protest against the same and urges its cancellation without delay.

XII.—The Famine.

This Congress deplores the out-break of famine in a more or less acute form throughout India, and holds that this and other famines which have occurred in recent years are due to the great poverty of the people, brought on by the drain of the wealth of the country which has been going on for years together, and by the excessive taxation and over-assessment consequent on a policy of extravagance, followed by the Government both in the Civil and the Military departments, which has so far impoverished the people that at the first touch of scarcity they are rendered helpless and must perish unless fed by the State or helped by private charity. In the opinion of this Congress the true remedy against the recurrence of famine lies in the adoption of a policy, which would enforce economy, husband the resources of the State, and foster the development of indigenous and local arts and industries which have practically been extinguished, and help the introduction of modern arts and industries. In the meantime the Congress would remind the Government of its solemn duty to save human life and mitigate human suffering (the provisions of the existing Famine Code being in the opinion of the Congress inadequate as regards wages, rations, and oppressive as regards task work), and would appeal to the Government to redeem its pledges by restoring the Famine Insurance Fund (keeping a separate account of it) to its original footing, and to apply it more largely to its original purpose *viz.*, the immediate relief of the famine stricken people. That in view of the fact that private charity in England is ready to flow freely into this country at this awful juncture, and considering that large classes of sufferers can be reached by private charity only, this Congress desires to enter its most emphatic protest against the manner in which the Government of India is at present blocking the way, and this Congress humbly ventures to express the hope that the disastrous mistake committed by Lord Lytton's Government in the matter will not be repeated on this occasion.

XIII.—Poverty, and its Remedies.

That this Congress once again would desire to call the attention of the Government to the deplorable condition of the poorer classes in India, full forty millions of whom, according to high official authority, drag out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation even in normal years, and the Congress would recommend the following amongst other measures for the amelioration of their condition:—(1) That the Permanent Settlement be extended to those parts of the country where it does not exist at the present time, and restrictions be put on over-assessments in those parts of India where it is not advisable to extend the Permanent Settlement at the present time, so as to leave the Rayats sufficient to maintain themselves; (2) That Agricultural Banks be established and that greater facilities be accorded for obtaining loans under the Agricultural Loans Act; (3) That the minimum income assessable under the Income Tax Act be raised from five hundred to one thousand; (4) That technical schools be established and local and indigenous manufactures fostered.

XIV.—Higher Education.

That the time having come when greater facilities are imperatively required for higher education and

the proper development of the Indian intellect than what are at present offered by examinations alone, this Congress is of opinion that the Acts of Incorporation of the Universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay should be amended so as to provide for the introduction of teaching functions and for a wider scope of learning, and so as to suit generally the requirements of the present day.

XV.—THE INLAND EMIGRATION ACT.

Having regard to the facility of intercourse between all parts of India and Assam this Congress is of opinion that the time has now arrived when the Inland Emigration Act I of 1882 as amended by Act VII of 1893 should be repealed.

XVI.—THE MADRAS AND BOMBAY GOVERNMENTS.

Having regard to the wisdom of the policy of appointing to the Governorships of Madras and Bombay, Statesmen from England to the exclusion of the Services in India, and in view to the utilisation to those Governors of the power of giving when necessary a casting vote allowed them by law, this Congress is of opinion that it is desirable that the Executive Governments of those Provinces should be administered by the Governors with councils of three members and not of two members as at present, and that one of the three councillors must be other than a member of the Indian Civil Service, and in view to carrying out the object without additional cost, this Congress would suggest that the officers commanding the forces of those Presidencies be declared members of the respective councils as the Commanders-in-Chief of Madras and Bombay were, before the Madras and Bombay Armies Act of 1893 was passed.

XVII.—LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENTS.

That this Congress enters its emphatic protest against the policy of Government, in provinces where the Settlement of Land Revenue is periodical, to reduce the duration of the Settlement to shorter periods than had been the case till now, and prays that the settlement should be guaranteed for long periods, at least for sixty years.

XVIII.—INDIAN PRINCES AND CHIEFS.

That in the opinion of this Congress it is desirable that in future no Indian Prince or Chief shall be deposed on the ground of mal-administration of misconduct until the fact of such maladministration or misconduct shall have been established to the satisfaction of a public Tribunal which shall command the confidence alike of Government and of the Indian Princes and Chiefs.

XIX.—REPRESENTATIVE IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

That this Congress puts on record its emphatic protest against the retrogade policy of the Government of India followed last year in nominating a gentleman for the Central Provinces to the Supreme Legislative Council without asking local bodies to make recommendation for such nomination, and earnestly hopes that Government will be pl[illegible]ased to take early steps to give to the Central Provin[illegible] the same kind of representation that it has a[illegible] granted to Bengal, Madras, Bombay and the North Western Provinces.

XX.—LORD WELBY'S COMMISSION.

That this Congress desires to place on record its sense of satisfaction at the delegation by the Bombay Presidency Association of Mr. Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha, Joint General Secretary of the Congress, to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Expenditure, and the Congress has full confidence that Mr. Wacha will give accurate and adequate expression to its views on the questions which form the subject of Enquiry.

XXI.—MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

This Congress again expresses its full and unabated confidence in Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji as the representative of the people of India and hopes that he will be re-elected by his old constituency of Central Finsbury or any other Liberal constituency.

XXII.—THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

That a sum of Rupees sixty thousand be assigned for the expenses of the British Committee and cost of the Congress Publication, INDIA, and also for the expenses of the Joint General Secretary's Office, and that the several circles do contribute as arranged, either now, or hereafter in committe, for the year 1897.

XXIII.—OFFICERS OF THE CONGRESS.

That this Congress reappoint Mr. A. O. Hume to be General Secretary, and Mr. D. E. Wacha to be Joint General Secretary for the ensuing year.

XXIV.—NEXT SESSION.

That the Thirteenth Congress do assemble on such day after Christmas Day 1897, as may be later determined upon, at Amraoti, Berar.

Reviews.

"ON THE FACE OF THE WATERS."

On the Face of the Waters. By FLORA ANNIE STEEL. (London: William Heinemann.)

There is a pretty story of a reviewer who commended an epic as "one of the best epics produced during the present year." The expression, which provokes a smile when it is applied to an epic, is used every day of novels, and from some points of view reasonably enough. Not only is the out-put of novels enormous, but the consumption of them by the average reader is enormous too; and to attain a place in the first half-dozen novels of a year is to achieve a success which is not only pleasant and creditable to the writer but interesting to nearly all of us. But the very fact that we consume so many novels leads to a dangerous confusion of standards. The critic does not always make it clear to his readers, probabl[illegible]s not always clear in his own mind, wh[illegible] is giving relative or absolute prais[illegible] is merely distinguishing a book [illegible] of printed-paper that pass for [illegible]or a novel the rare honours of [illegible] For those honours are rare,

even in fiction; literary excellence, as Matthew Arnold would say, is *not* common and abundant. In spite of the vast yearly out-put of novels, it may be questioned whether good historical novels—to confine ourselves to one department of fiction — are much more numerous than good epics.

These remarks have been suggested by the tone which has been generally adopted by reviewers in speaking of Mrs. Steel's romance. "On the Face of the Waters" deserves most of the success it has won. It is distinguished from the common ruck of novels by its ambitious aim, and by the labour and ability that have gone to its making. That it has already passed into a fourth edition is a fact creditable alike to the public and its guides. Let so much be said ungrudgingly at the outset, to prevent misunderstanding. But when we find so accomplished a critic as "Q" felicitating himself on the prospect that thirty years hence it will redound to his credit that in 1896 he discerned the greatness of this romance, it seems a duty to protest that there are essential differences between "On the Face of the Waters" and the really great historical novels. It is an ill-natured criticism, the kindly "Q" will interpose, that extols the dead classics who have no need of our praise and snubs the living author who has his bread to earn. But surely the curse of literature, as well as of life, is that "Each day brings its petty dust, Our soon-choked souls to fill," and a reviewer's first and most sacred duty is to set a high standard, to test all work by the touch-stone of the great masters.

"I have not allowed fiction to interfere with fact in the slightest degree," Mrs. Steel writes in her preface, and her words are quoted with admiration by "Q" and other critics. "The reader may rest assured that every incident bearing in the remotest degree on the Indian Mutiny, or on the part which real men took in it, is scrupulously exact, even to the date, the hour, the scene, the very weather. Nor have I allowed the actual actors in the great tragedy to say a word regarding it which is not to be found in the accounts of eye-witnesses, or in their own writings." Of Mrs. Steel's untiring industry there can be no doubt whatever; she has the infinite capacity for taking pains that is at least one part or one way of genius. But is her method of writing historical fiction a sound one? A critic cannot refuse it his admiration, yet he may be forgiven for feeling the same doubt that has occurred to many a thoughtful spectator of the still more laborious work in painting of Mr. Holman Hunt. This conscientious study of details, this photographic realism, it has its merits, no doubt; but the signs of the workmanship are too obtrusive, the thought of the labour involved is almost painful. And in spite of all her elaborate study, perhaps because of it all, Mrs. Steel's narrative of the Indian Mutiny is by no means clear. As in the case of Carlyle's "French Revolution," you must know the events first, if you are to follow the pictures of them intelligently. Perhaps the baleful influence of [illegible]'s style and method is visible, not certainl[illegible]lylese distortions of language, but par[illegible] of the incidents, partly in repeti[illegible] catch-words. "The cloud of d[illegible] Meerut"—one wonders how many times this phrase is repeated; and there is iteration of less picturesque and helpful phrases too, cries of "Merciful heavens!" and the like, that lessen the power of situations they are meant to emphasise.

Mrs. Steel has done wisely, as "Q" has pointed out, in a criticism in *The Speaker*, to which reference has already been made, in creating fictitious characters for her protagonists and introducing historical personages only as secondary characters. Hodson, of Hodson's Horse, and John Nicholson, are graphically pourtrayed; but the real heroes of the book, Jim Douglas and Herbert Erlton, and the heroines, Mrs. Erlton and Mrs. Gissing, are unknown to history. Whether she quite succeeds in making the lives of her imagined characters profoundly interesting in themselves is a further question. If she does not, she fails as a novelist, though she may succeed as a historian. The main interest, certainly, for most readers, will lie in the historical narrative, in the fortunes of the siege of Delhi, in the humours of the sham court or the populace, in the vivid Eastern colouring. Yet the *motif* that runs through the story—sordid and unpleasant at first, but gradually tending to a nobler issue—of the fictitious characters, is worthier than present-day fiction too often shows. It is nothing less than the redemption of spoiled lives by heroic deeds. Douglas and Erlton are both men whom passion has led into sin and disgrace. The Indian Mutiny gave them a chance of redeeming themselves, and both were saved by it, one to die and one to live. As Robert Browning, in so many plays and poems, showed that in the most common-place lives there may come a crisis in which the soul has to reveal, once for all, of what stuff it is made, so Mrs. Steel has conceived of the Indian Mutiny as presenting such a crisis to more than one sullied, but still redeemable, English soul. And in several scenes she rises to the height of her argument, especially in the fine scene where Herbert Erlton's body lies in his tent, making mute but eloquent appeal, like the souls of those who had sinned "but not irremediably" in Plato's vision of Tartarus, to his wife's forgiveness. Worthy, too, is the authoress's aspiration to bring nearer the time when the white race and the dark shall understand each other better, and, in the light of better understanding, learn to forget and forgive. "High failures," says the poet, "overleap the bounds of low successes." To point out that Mrs. Steel has still heights to conquer if she would become a great novelist is, after all, to pay her a better compliment than to congratulate her on the success of a season.

THE INDIAN VILLAGE COMMUNITY.

The Indian Village Community: examined with reference to the Physical, Ethnographic, and Historical conditions of the Provinces, chiefly on the basis of the Revenue-Settlement Records and District Manuals." By B. H. Baden-Powell, M.A., C.I.E. (London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green, and Co.)

We have already become pleasantly acquainted [illegible] Mr. Baden-Powell through his useful, though

somewhat brief, sketch of the "Land Revenue Administration in India," and we take it as quite natural that he should now go a step deeper and tackle the mysteries of the village Communities. The present ample and solid volume needs no apology for its existence; there is no truer word in it, or out of it, than that "in this department, at any rate, there is a distinctly vacant place." The vacancy, in fact, is all the more glaring from the inadequate attempts that have been made to fill it up. Sir Henry Maine, whom Mr. Baden-Powell still treats with all but fetishistic reverence, told his readers long ago that "no Indian phenomenon has been more carefully examined, and by men more thoroughly in earnest, than the Village Community." Yet what he himself proceeded to describe was, in his own words, not a specific institution, but "a typical form to which the village-communities appear to me upon the evidence I have seen to approximate, rather than a model to which all existing groups called by the name can be exactly fitted." Any abstract and unified conception of "*the* village" must lead to errors of a disastrous kind; and such baneful results are only magnified and canonized by prostration before a plausible authority. Mr. Baden-Powell's volume is most valuable simply because its main purpose is to give the facts. "I confess," he says, "to have felt more concerned about marshalling the facts of the case and setting forth the conditions under which those facts are found, than with elaborating arguments and conclusions." Now, it is just the facts and circumstances that are most urgently needed. All preceding conclusions are limited in value by the slenderness of the basis of fact whence they have been drawn. Mr. Baden-Powell, indeed, reaches certain conclusions of his own. He leaves still, however, "a distinctly vacant place." We shall look to him for a supplementary volume "elaborating arguments and conclusions." And when he resumes his pen for this great task, we trust he will keep before his eyes the trenchant method of Fustel de Coulanges in dealing with the theories of the origin of property in land.

The difficulties of the enquiry are numberless and most trying. Mr. Baden-Powell has cut a way through the jungle, more or less rough, but still a way. He has guided himself mainly by the Revenue Settlement Records and District Manuals. Now, the question at once arises, how far can such evidence be relied on? The men that drew up these documents may or may not have been careful as to the precise facts. They were almost without exception working under pressure, and probably the vast mass of such reports consists of materials gathered together, no man can say how or on what authority, by subordinates that may or may not have been careless, or ignorant, or insensible to historical and archæological interests. If we remember aright, Mr. Baden-Powell speaks of these records with great respect in his book on Revenue Administration, and even assigns them a legal authority in the absence of proof to the contrary. Has Mr. Baden-Powell ever tried their lordships of Her Majesty's Privy Council with the evidence of a Khasra or a Wajib-ul-arz? True, legal proof is one thing, and historical proof is another. But, for all that, it is quite plain that not a single Revenue Settlement Record or District Manual can be safely used for the purpose of investigation into the history and nature of Village Communities without a vigorous testing of the circumstances of its origin. To deliver yourself to the authority of the writer without such a searching estimate is to shut your eyes and exclude yourself from the scientific field. On some such considerations we must regard the present volume as substantially pioneer work, good of its kind undoubtedly and exceedingly valuable in the existing state of the enquiry, yet in all essentials only of a provisional nature. We earnestly hope that the author will follow it up with a sharp critical examination of the materials, and with definite theories whether destructive or constructive. There is room for an epoch-making volume.

Mr. Baden-Powell, then, has amassed and marshalled a vast body of facts (subject to further criticism, as already said). He starts with the common view of the village tenures, and describes the two forms of village—raiyatwari and joint. Then follows a very pertinent and suggestive consideration of the geographical, physical, ethnographic, historical and customary conditions affecting the movement of agricultural tribes and their forms of land-holding. Geographical features, of course, do not explain everything; but the main points indicated by Mr. Baden-Powell certainly "had a very clear connection with the facts of the Aryan advance, the occupation of the Indus Valley, the early Aryan connection with Upper Western India by that route, and the subjugation of the Ganges Valley or Plain, as well as with the fact that no extensive Aryan movement south of the Vindhyas took place." While indicating physical features that invite village formation, the author points out the absence of village groups in certain districts—the British Himalayan districts (Kangra, Kumaon, Garhwal), the West Coast (North and South Kanara, and Malabar), and the South Punjab. This is a very interesting point to work out. The ethnographic discussion is very full and important, especially the points of Aryan and non-Aryan custom. The insistence on a specially agricultural caste among the Hindus has largely tended to emphasize the view that Indian village institutions are essentially or mainly Aryan. Mr. Baden-Powell concludes that "it may be safely asserted that all the upper classes of Aryan origin had little feeling for agriculture, and that India does not owe to them either the introduction of settled cultivation or (directly) any particular policy or principle of land-ownership"—a conclusion coinciding with the view of Sir William Hunter, that "throughout five-sixths of the continent the actual work of tillage remained in the hands of the non-Aryan or Sudra races, and that even at a remote time husbandry would become as degrading an occupation in the eyes of the Aryan conquerors as the tending of sheep was to the Mosaic Pharaohs."

"From all that we know of the results of the Aryan invasion, the chief agent in producing varied forms of land-tenure must have been the introduction of a number of centralised governments, with the opportunities that they afforded for the growth of over-lordships, whether extending to considerable estates or to single villages. . . . . Even in those Aryan villages that

were always held by cultivating fraternities from the first, the co-sharers, "democratic" though we may call them, and having no pretensions to any noble rank, still regarded themselves as holding the land on a superior tenure extending to the whole area of their possession, in a way that we do not observe among the humbler *raiyatwari* communities. And it may be convenient to add that the same feeling of superiority and of union was evinced by the Jat, Moslem, and other clans, who later formed similar settlements of joint-villages. . . . . Aryan land holding, in the case of all the higher castes, had thus a natural tendency to the landlord form. Otherwise, we have no evidence whatever that the Aryan mind conceived any *special form of village* as such. . . . . As to the earliest ideas of land holding among the Aryans, in the state of movement and constant warfare which the Vedic hymns represent, we do not find any direct or even covert allusion to any system of sharing the land conquered or occupied. . . . . What is still more to the purpose is, that there is no mention in the much later *Laws of Manu* of anything like a joint-village or an area of land held "in common." This is the more remarkable because the joint inheritance principle *is* fully asserted. . . . . As regards a general idea of title to the soil, or property in land, I am not aware of any direct declaration on the subject earlier than the mention of it in the *Laws of Manu*.

On these points Mr. Baden-Powell comes into collision with several of the best known exponents of the general thesis of collective ownership, and the whole question requires more detailed exposition and criticism. The special chapter on "The Tribe and the Village" is very useful, and in points incisive. The review of the various known origins of actually existing joint-villages, "apart from any general *a priori* theory," leads to the conclusion "that we have two great causes for union—(1) the existence of a tribal or clan stage of society with all that this stage implies, especially in the way of a right to share equally in the tribal acquisition; (2) the influence of the joint-family and its law of joint-inheritance; and to these we might perhaps add a third—voluntary association and combination." This review Mr. Baden-Powell follows up with an examination of the internal structure of joint-villages, exhibiting the minor variations and the modifications in the form of constitution. Thereafter he deals with the two types of village in juxta-position locally. Let us now present the substance of his general conclusion on the more important elements of the enquiry:

"I believe that individual ownership of the personally cleared and prepared holding in the tribal territory is quite consistent with the customs of tribal society at an early stage. Actual joint-property does not exist among the whole clan: at best, there is an appearance of collectivity caused by the common origin and close defensive and offensive alliance of the whole clan; by the equal right of everyone to share in the land obtained by the united exertion of the clan; and by the obligation to obey the patriarchal authorities, and to submit to that equalisation of holding in the tribal territory to secure which custom decreed that all holdings should be periodically exchanged. Actual joint-ownership is exhibited in the records of the Indian villages, as far as I can discover, only (*a*) among the *families* forming separated groups on a clean territory, (*b*) where there has been one owner of the whole village and his direct heirs continue to hold it without partition, (*c*) when the cultivation of an entire village has been undertaken by a group of colonists who prefer to arrange for each year, or cultivating season, what area or what fields each member shall take up, according to the number of hands, number of cattle, etc., he can bring to the work . . . . (*d*) It is also possible that particular plots of land may be always held in a sense jointly by a number of sharers, who may represent even an entire group of village owners, when there is some peculiarity, as for instance when a portion of village lands are along a river, and so are both liable to be washed away at one time and added to at another, and also to be exceptionally valuable, a little further inland, owing to the unfailing percolation of moisture. . . . If there are other forms or cases of joint-holding, it will be very interesting to hear of them. . . . . I have not met with any such.

The theory, then, that all joint villages *begin* with a "common ownership"; that this, by a process of natural evolution, goes on to strict shares; that, next, the shares become irregular; and, finally, that mere individual *de facto* holdings emerge, is distinctly contrary to the facts. It is based on a false generalisation from "joint-villages" of different kinds of origins; and it ignores the fact that when, in any given village, there has actually been a joint holding, followed by a partition into ancestral fractional shares, and these have been transformed into simple *de facto* holdings, the joint condition was not original, but consequent on a prior *single* title of the founder, grantee, &c., of the village; the joint holding was the result of the joint-succession (on ancestral shares) to that one founder. There is no progress of ideas, or evolution, in the matter.

Those students of early conditions that have committed themselves decisively to the collectivist view will dislike Mr. Baden-Powell's book exceedingly, and put their knife in it with a will. Those that wait for more materials and further verification will welcome it with no less cordiality as a noble contribution of facts and suggestions, to say nothing of the incidental criticisms of details, and the broad conclusions. It remains, we repeat, that Mr. Baden-Powell apply the same intellectual candour to the criticism of his authorities, and that thereupon he come to final conclusions on the Indian Village Community, and, so far as may be practicable, on the general question.

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